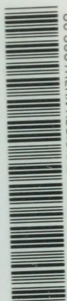
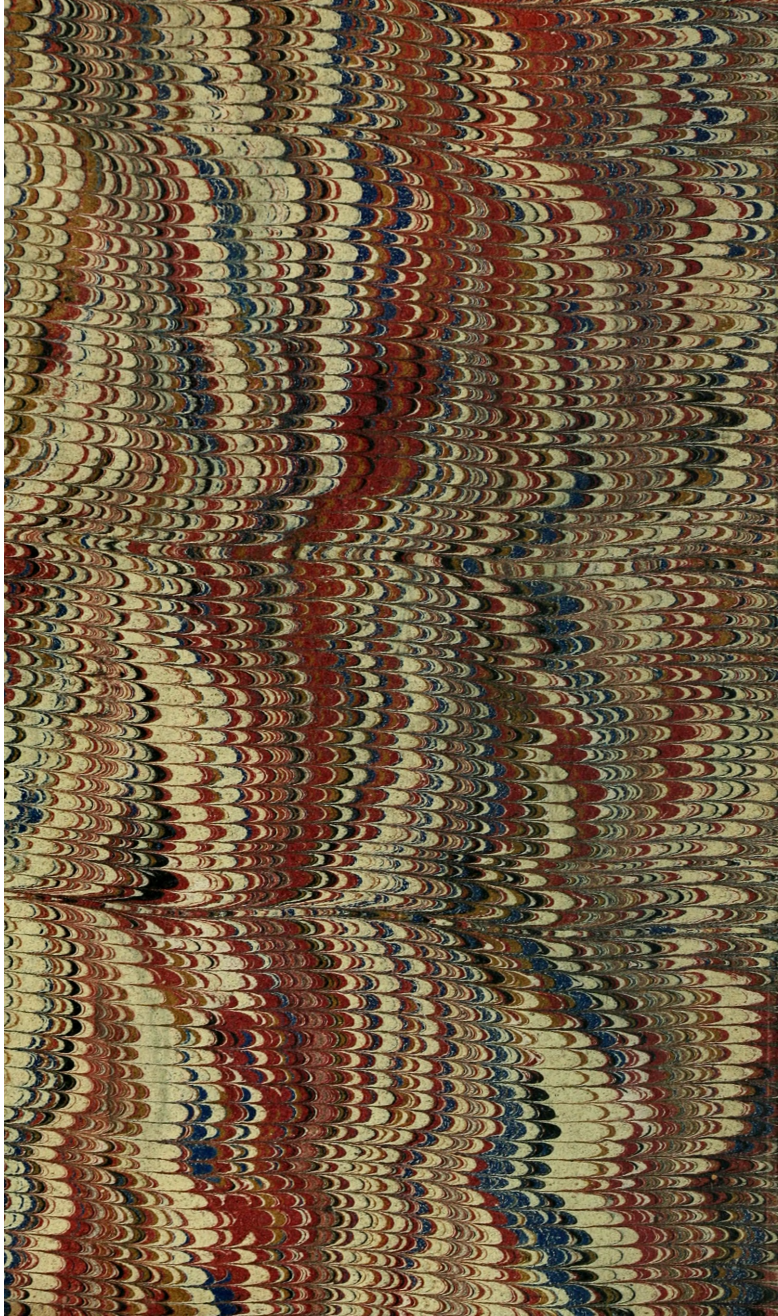


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THE
KING'S OWN.

BY

THE AUTHOR OF "THE NAVAL OFFICER."

O you Gods !
Why do you make us love your goodly gifts
And snatch them straight away ?

SHAKSPEARE'S *Pericles*.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.



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THE KING'S OWN.

CHAPTER I.

“However boldly their warm blood was spilt,
Their life was shame, their epitaph was guilt ;
And this they knew and felt, at least the one,
The leader of the band he had undone,—
Who, born for better things, had madly set
His life upon a *cast*, which lingered yet.”

BYRON.

THERE is perhaps no event in the annals of our history, which excited more alarm at the time of its occurrence, or has since been the subject of more general interest, than the Mutiny at the Nore, in the year 1797. Forty thousand men,

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to whom the nation looked for defence from its surrounding enemies, and in stedfast reliance upon whose bravery it lay down every night in tranquillity,—men who had dared everything for their King and country, and in whose breasts, patriotism, although suppressed for the time, could never be extinguished,—irritated by ungrateful neglect on the one hand, and by seditious advisers on the other, turned the guns which they had so often manned in defence of the English flag, against their own countrymen and their own home, and, with all the acrimony of feeling ever attending family quarrels, seemed determined to sacrifice the nation and themselves, rather than listen to the dictates of reason and of conscience.

Doubtless there is a point at which endurance of oppression ceases to be a virtue, and rebellion can no longer be considered as a crime: but it is a dangerous and intricate problem, the solution of which had better not be attempted. It must, however, be acknowledged,

that the seamen, on the occasion of the first mutiny, had just grounds of complaint, and that they did not proceed to acts of violence, until repeated and humble remonstrance had been made in vain.

Whether we act in a body or individually, such is the infirmity and selfishness of human nature, that we often surrender to importunity that which we refuse to the dictates of gratitude,—yielding for our own comfort, to the demands of turbulence, while quiet, unpretending merit is overlooked, and oppressed, until, roused by neglect, it demands, as a right, what policy alone should have granted as a favour.

Such was the behaviour, on the part of government, which produced the mutiny at the Nore.

What mechanism is more complex than the mind of man? And as, in all machinery, there are wheels and springs of action, not apparent without close examination of the interior, so pride, ambition, avarice, love, play alternately

or conjointly upon the human mind, which, under their influences, is whirled round like the weathercock in the hurricane, only pointing for a short time in one direction, but for that time stedfastly. How difficult, then, to analyze the motives and inducements which actuated the several ring-leaders in this dreadful crisis!

Let us, therefore, confine ourselves to what we do really know to have been the origin of discontent in one of these men, whose unfortunate career is intimately connected with this history.

Edward Peters was a man of talent and education. He had entered on board the —— in a fit of desperation, to obtain the bounty for a present support, and his pay as a future provision, for his wife, and an only child, the fruit of a hasty and unfortunate marriage. He was soon distinguished as a person of superior attainments; and instead of being employed, as a landsman usually is, in the afterguard, or waist, of the ship, he was placed under the orders of the purser and captain's clerk as

an amanuensis. In this capacity he remained two or three years, approved of and treated with unusual respect by the officers, for his gentleman-like appearance and behaviour: but, unfortunately a theft had been committed,—a watch, of trifling value, had been purloined from the purser's cabin; and, as he was the only person, with the exception of the servant, who had free ingress and egress, suspicion fell upon him—the more so as, after every search that could be made had proved ineffectual, it was supposed that the purloined property had been sent on shore to be disposed of by his wife, who, with his child, had frequently been permitted to visit him on board.

Summoned on the quarter-deck—cross-examined, and harshly interrogated—called a scoundrel by the captain before conviction,—the proud blood mantled in the cheeks of one who, at that period, was incapable of crime. The blush of virtuous indignation was construed into presumptive evidence of guilt. The cap-

tain,—a superficial, presuming, pompous, yet cowardly creature, whose conduct assisted in no small degree to excite the mutiny on board of his own ship,—declared himself quite convinced of Peters's guilt, because he blushed at the bare idea of being suspected; and punishment ensued, with all the degradation allotted to an offence which is never forgiven on board of a man-of-war.

There is, perhaps, no crime that is attended with such serious consequences on board a ship as theft. A succession of thefts undiscovered will disintegrate a ship's company, break up the messes, destroy all confidence and harmony, and occasion those who have been the dearest friends to become the greatest enemies: for whom can a person suspect, when he has lost his property, in so confined a space, but those who were acquainted with its being in his possession, and with the place in which it was deposited?—and who are these but his own messmates, or those in whom he most con-

fided? After positive conviction, no punishment can be too severe for a crime that produces such mischief; but to degrade a man by corporal punishment, to ruin his character and render him an object of abhorrence and contempt, in the absence of even bare presumptive evidence, was an act of cruelty and injustice, which could excite but one feeling: and, from that day, the man who would have gloried in dying for his country, became a discontented, gloomy, and dangerous subject.

The above effect would have been produced in any man; but to Peters, whose previous history we have yet to narrate, death itself would have been preferable. His heart did not break, but it swelled with contending passions, till it was burst and riven with wounds never to be cicatrized. Suffering under the most painful burthen that can oppress a man who values reputation, writhing with the injustice of accusation when innocent, of conviction without proof, and of punishment unmerited, it is not

to be wondered at that Peters took the earliest opportunity of deserting from the ship.

There is a particular feeling pervading animal nature, from which man himself is not exempt. Indeed, with all his boasted reason, man still inherits too many of the propensities of the brute creation. I refer to that disposition which not only inclines us to feel satisfaction at finding we have companions in misfortune, but too often stimulates us to increase the number by our own exertions. From the stupendous elephant, down to the smallest of the feathered tribe, all will act as a decoy to their own species, when in captivity themselves; and, in all compulsory service, which may be considered a species of captivity, man proves that he is embued with the same propensity. Seamen that have been pressed themselves into the navy, are invariably the most active in pressing others; and both soldiers and sailors have a secret pleasure in recapturing a deserter, even at the very time when they are watching an opportunity to desert themselves.

The bonds of friendship seem destroyed when this powerful and brutal feeling is called into action ; and, as has frequently occurred in the service, before and since, the man who was selected by Peters as his most intimate friend, the man with whom he had consulted, and to whom he had confided his plans for desertion, gave information of the retreat of his wife and child, from which place Peters was not likely to be very distant ; and thus, with the assistance of this, his dearest friend, the master-at-arms and party in quest of him succeeded in his capture.

It so happened, that on the very day on which Peters was brought on board and put into irons, the purser's servant was discovered to have in his possession the watch that had been lost. Thus far the character of Peters was reinstated ; and, as he had declared at the time of his capture, that the unjust punishment which he had received had been the motive of his desertion, the captain was strongly urged by the officers

to overlook an offence which had every thing to be offered in its extenuation. But Captain A—— was fond of courts-martial ; he imagined that they added to his consequence, which certainly required to be upheld by adventitious aid. Moreover, the feeling too often pervading little minds, that of a dislike taken to a person because you have injured him, and the preferring to accumulate injustice, rather than to acknowledge error, had more than due weight with this weak man. A court-martial was held, and Peters was sentenced to death ; but, in consideration of circumstances, the sentence was mitigated to that of being “ flogged round the fleet.”

Mitigated ! Strange vanity in men, that they should imagine their own feelings to be more sensible and acute than those of others ; that they should consider *that* a *mitigation* in favour of the prisoner, which, had they been placed in his situation, they would have declared an *accumulation* of the punishment. Not a captain who sat upon that court-martial but would

have considered, as Peters did, that death was by far the more lenient sentence of the two. Yet they meant well—they felt kindly towards him, and acknowledged his provocations; but they fell into the too common error of supposing that the finer feelings, which induce a man to prefer death to dishonour, are only to be recognised among the higher classes; and that, because circumstances may have placed a man before the mast, he will undergo punishment, however severe, however degrading,—in short, every “ill that flesh is heir to,”—in preference to death.

As the reader may not perhaps be acquainted with the nature of the punishment to which Peters was sentenced, and the ceremonies by which it is attended, I shall enter into a short description of it.

A man sentenced to be flogged round the fleet, receives an equal part of the whole number of lashes awarded alongside each ship composing that fleet. For instance, if sentenced to three

hundred lashes, in a fleet composed of ten sail, he will receive thirty alongside of each ship.

A launch is fitted up with a platform and shears. It is occupied by the unfortunate individual, the provost-martial, the boatswain, and his mates, with their implements of office, and armed marines stationed at the bow and stern. When the signal is made for punishment, all the ships in the fleet send one or two boats each, with crews cleanly dressed, the officers in full uniform, and marines under arms. These boats collect at the side of the ship, where the launch is lying, the hands are turned up, and the ship's company are ordered to mount the rigging, to witness that portion of the whole punishment which, after the sentence has been read, is inflicted upon the prisoner. When he has received the allotted number of lashes, he is, for the time, released, and permitted to sit down, with a blanket over his shoulders, while the boats, which attend the execution of the sentence, make fast

to the launch, and tow it to the next ship in the fleet, where the same number of lashes are inflicted with corresponding ceremonies ;—and thus he is towed from one ship to the other until he has received the whole of his punishment.

The severity of this punishment consists not only in the number of lashes, but in the peculiar manner in which they are inflicted ; as, after the unfortunate wretch has received the first part of his sentence alongside of one ship, the blood is allowed to congeal, and the wounds partially to close, during the interval which takes place previously to his arrival alongside of the next, when the cat again subjects him to renewed and increased torture. During the latter part of the punishment, the suffering is dreadful ; and a man who has undergone this sentence is generally broken down in constitution, if not in spirits, for the remainder of his life.

Such was the punishment inflicted upon the unfortunate Peters ; and it would be difficult to

decide, at the moment when it was completed, and the blanket thrown over his shoulders, whether the heart or the back of the fainting man were the more lacerated of the two.

Time can heal the wounds of the body, over which it holds its empire; but those of the soul, like the soul itself, spurn his transitory sway.

Peters, from that moment, was a desperate man. A short time after he had undergone his sentence, the news of the mutiny at Spithead was communicated; and the vacillation and apprehensions of the Admiralty, and of the nation at large, were not to be concealed. This mutiny was apparently quelled by conciliation; but conciliation is but a half-measure, and ineffectual when offered from superiors to inferiors.

In this world, I know not why, there seems to be but one seal binding in all contracts of magnitude—and that seal is *blood*. Without referring to the Jewish types, proclaiming that “all things were purified by blood, and without shedding of

blood there was no remission,"—without referring to that sublime mystery by which these types have been fulfilled,—it appears as if, in all ages and all countries, blood had been the only seal of security.

Examine the records of history, the revolution of opinion, the public tumults, the warfare for religious ascendancy—it will be found that, without this seal, these were only lulled for the moment, and invariably recommenced until *blood* had made its appearance as witness to “the act and deed.”

CHAPTER II.

“ This is a long description, but applies
To scarce five minutes past before the eyes ;
But yet *what* minutes ! Moments like to these
Rend men's lives into immortalities.”

BYRON.

THE mutiny at Spithead was soon followed up by that at the Nore ; and the ringleader, Parker, like a meteor darting through the firmament, sprung from nothing, corruscated, dazzled, and disappeared. The Texel fleet joined, except a few ships, which the courage and conduct of the gallant old Admiral Duncan preserved from the contagion. Let me here digress a little, to intro-

duce to my readers the speech made by this officer to his ship's company on the first symptoms of disaffection. It is supposed that sailors are not eloquent. I assert that, with the exception of the North American Indians, who have, to perfection, the art of saying much in few words, there are few people more eloquent than sailors. The general object looked for, in this world, is to obtain the greatest possible effect with the smallest power; if so, the more simple the language, the more matter is condensed, the nearer we approach to perfection. Flourishes and flowers of rhetoric may be compared to extra wheels applied to a carriage, increasing the rattling and complexity of the machine, without adding to either the strength of its fabric or the rapidity of its course.

It was on the 6th of June that the fleet at the Nore was joined by the *Agamemnon*, *Leopard*, *Ardent*, and other ships, which had separated from Admiral Duncan's fleet. When the admiral found himself deserted by part of his own

fleet, he called his own ship's crew together, and addressed them in the following speech :—

“ My lads ! I once more call you together with a sorrowful heart, owing to what I have lately seen, the disaffection of the fleets ; I call it disaffection, for the crews have no grievances. To be deserted by my fleet, in the face of the enemy, is a disgrace which, I believe, never before happened to a British admiral ; nor could I have supposed it possible. My greatest comfort under God is, that I have been supported by the officers, seamen, and marines of this ship, for which, with a heart overflowing with gratitude, I request you to accept my sincere thanks. I flatter myself much good may result from your example, by bringing those deluded people to a sense of the duty which they owe, not only to their King and country, but to themselves.

“ The British Navy has ever been the support of that liberty which has been handed down to us by our ancestors, and which I trust

we shall maintain to the latest posterity—and that can only be done by unanimity and obedience. This ship's company, and others, who have distinguished themselves by loyalty and good order, deserve to be, and doubtless will be, the favourites of a grateful nation. They will also have, from their inward feelings, a comfort which will be lasting, and not like the floating and false confidence of those who have swerved from their duty.

“It has often been my pride with you to look into the Texel, and see a foe which dreaded coming out to meet us. My pride is now humbled indeed ! Our cup has overflown, and made us wanton—the Allwise Providence has given us this check as a warning, and I hope we shall improve by it. On Him then let us trust where our only security is to be found. I find there are many good men among us ; for my own part, I have had full confidence of all in this ship ; and once more I beg to express my approbation of your conduct.

“ May God, who has thus far conducted you, continue to do so ; and may the British Navy, the glory and support of our country, be restored to its wonted splendour, and be not only the bulwark of Britain, but the terror of the world.

“ But this can only be effected by a strict adherence to our duty and obedience ; and let us pray that the Almighty God may keep us in the right way of thinking.

“ God bless you all.”

At an address so unassuming, and so calculated, from its simplicity and truth, to touch the human heart, the whole ship's crew were melted into tears, and declared their resolution to adhere to their admiral in life or death. Had all the ships in the fleet been commanded by such men as Admiral Duncan, the mutiny at Spithead would not have been succeeded by that at the Nore ; but the seamen had no confidence, either in their officers, or in those who presided

at the Board of Admiralty : and distrust of their promises, which were considered to be given merely to gain time, was the occasion of the second and more alarming rebellion of the two.

The irritated mind of Peters was stimulated to join the disaffected parties. His pride, his superior education, and the acknowledgment among his shipmates that he was an injured man, all conspired to place him in the dangerous situation of ringleader on board of his own ship, the crew of which, although it had not actually joined in the mutiny, now shewed open signs of discontent.

But the mine was soon exploded by the behaviour of the captain. Alarmed at the mutinous condition of the other ships which were anchored near to him, and the symptoms of dissatisfaction in his own, he proceeded to an act of unjustifiable severity, evidently impelled by fear, and not by resolution. He ordered several of the petty officers and leading men of the ship to be thrown into irons, because

they were seen to be earnestly talking together on the fore-castle,—and, recollecting that his conduct towards Peters had been such as to warrant disaffection, he added him to the number. The effect of this injudicious step was immediate. The men came aft in a body on the quarter-deck, and requested to know the grounds upon which Peters and the other men had been placed in confinement; and, perceiving alarm in the countenance of the captain, notwithstanding the resolute bearing of the officers, they insisted upon the immediate release of their shipmates. Thus the first overt act of mutiny was brought on by the misconduct of the captain.

The officers expostulated and threatened in vain. Three cheers were called for by a voice in the crowd, and three cheers were immediately given. The marines, who still remained true to their allegiance, had been ordered under arms; the first lieutenant of the ship—for the captain, trembling and confused, stood a mere cypher—gave the order for the ship's company

to go down below, threatening to fire upon them if the order were not instantaneously obeyed. The captain of marines brought his men to the "make ready," and they were about to present, when the first lieutenant waved his hand to stop the decided measure, until he had first ascertained how far the mutiny was general. He stepped a few paces forward, and requested that every "blue jacket" who was inclined to remain faithful to his King and country, would walk over from that side of the quarter-deck upon which the ship's company were assembled, to the one which was occupied by the officers and marines.

A pause and silence ensued—when, after some pushing and elbowing through the crowd, William Adams, an elderly quarter-master, made his appearance in the front, and passed over to the side where the officers stood, while the hisses of the rest of the ship's company expressed their disapprobation of his conduct. The old man had just reached the other side

of the deck, when, turning round like a lion at bay, with one foot on the *comings* of the hatchway, and his arm raised in the air to command attention, he addressed them in these few words :

“ My lads, I have fought for my King five and thirty years, and have been too long in his service to turn a rebel in my old age.”

Would it be credited that, after the mutiny had been quelled, no representation of this conduct was made to government by his captain? Yet such was the case, and such was the gratitude of Captain A——.

The example shewn by Adams was not followed :—the ship's crew again cheered, and ran down the hatchways, leaving the officers and marines on deck. They first disarmed the sentry under the half deck, and released the prisoners, and then went forward to consult upon further operations.

They were not long in deciding. A boat-swain's mate, who was one of the ringleaders, piped, “ Stand by hammocks !” The men ran

on deck, each seizing a hammock, and jumping with it down below on the main deck. The object of this manœuvre not being comprehended, they were suffered to execute it without interruption. In a few minutes they sent up the marine, whom they had disarmed when sentry over the prisoners, to state that they wished to speak with the captain and officers, who, after some discussion, agreed that they would descend and hear the proposals which the ship's company should make. Indeed, even with the aid of the marines, many of whom were wavering, resistance would now have been useless, and could only have cost them their lives : for they were surrounded by other ships who had hoisted the flag of insubordination, and whose guns were trained ready to pour in a destructive fire on the least sign of an attempt to purchase their anchor. To the main deck they consequently repaired.

The scene which here presented itself was as striking as it was novel. The after part of

the main deck was occupied by the captain and officers, who had come down with the few marines who still continued steadfast to their duty, and one sailor only, Adams, who had so nobly stated his determination on the quarter-deck. The foremost part of the deck was tenanted by a noisy and tumultuous throng of seamen, whose heads only appeared above a barricade of hammocks, which they had formed across the deck, and out of which at two embrasures, admirably constructed, two long twenty-four pounders, loaded up to the muzzle with grape and canister shot, were pointed aft in the direction where the officers and marines were standing—a man at the breech of each gun, with a match in his hand, (which he occasionally blew, that the priming powder might be more rapidly ignited,) stood ready for the signal to fire.

The captain, aghast at the sight, would have retreated, but the officers, formed of sterner materials, persuaded him to stay, although he shewed such evident signs of fear and perturba-

tion, as seriously to injure a cause, in which resolution and presence of mind alone could avail. The mutineers, at the suggestion of Peters, had already sent aft their preliminary proposals, which were that the officers and marines should surrender up their arms, and consider themselves under an arrest,—intimating, at the same time, that the first step in advance made by any one of their party would be the signal for applying the match to the touchholes of the guns.

There was a pause and dead silence as if it were a calm, although every passion was roused and on the alert, every bosom heaved tumultuously, and every pulse was trebled in its action. The same feeling which so powerfully affects the truant schoolboy,—who, aware of his offence, and dreading the punishment in perspective, can scarce enjoy the rapture of momentary emancipation,—acted upon the mutineers, in an increased ratio, proportioned to the magnitude of their stake. Some hearts beat with remembrance of injuries and hopes of vengeance

and retaliation ; others with ambition, long dormant, bursting from its concealed recess ; and many were actuated by that restlessness which induced them to consider any change to be preferable to the monotony of existence in compulsory servitude.

Among the officers, some were oppressed with anxious forebodings of evil,—those peculiar sensations which, when death approaches nearly to the outward senses, alarm the heart ; others experienced no feeling but that of manly fortitude and determination to die, if necessary, like men ; in others, alas !—in which party, small as it was, the captain was pre-eminent—fear and trepidation amounted almost to the loss of reason.

Such was the state of the main-deck of the ship, at the moment in which we are now describing it to the reader.

And yet, in the very centre of all this tumult, there was one who, although not indifferent to the scene around him, felt interested without

being anxious; astonished without being alarmed. Between the contending and divided parties, stood a little boy, about six years old. He was the perfection of childish beauty; chestnut hair waved in curls on his forehead, health glowed in his rosy cheeks, dimples sported over his face as he altered the expression of his countenance, and his large dark eyes flashed with intelligence and animation. He was dressed in mimic imitation of a man-of-war's-man,—loose trousers, tightened at the hips, to preclude the necessity of suspenders,—and a white duck frock, with long sleeves and blue collar,—while a knife, attached to a lanyard, was suspended round his neck: a light and narrow-brimmed straw hat on his head, completed his attire. At times he looked aft at the officers and marines; at others he turned his eyes forward to the hammocks behind which the ship's company were assembled. The sight was new to him, but he was already accustomed to reflect much, and to ask few questions. Go to the officers he did not,

for the presence of the captain restrained him. Go to the ship's company he could not, for the barricade of hammocks prevented him. There he stood, in wonderment, but not in fear.

There was something beautiful and affecting in the situation of the boy; calm, when all around him was anxious tumult; thoughtless, when the brains of others were oppressed with the accumulation of ideas; contented, where all was discontent; peaceful, where each party that he stood between was thirsting for each other's blood:—there he stood, the only happy, the only innocent one, amongst hundreds swayed by jarring interests and contending passions.

And yet he was in keeping, although in such strong contrast, with the rest of the picture; for where is the instance of the human mind being so thoroughly depraved, as not to have one good feeling left? Nothing exists so base and vile, as not to have one redeeming quality. There is no poison without some antidote—no precipice, however barren, without some trace

of verdure—no desert, however vast, without some spring to refresh the parched traveller, some Oasis, some green spot, which, from its situation, in comparison with surrounding objects, appears almost heavenly;—and thus did the boy look almost angelic, standing as he did between the angry exasperated parties on the main-deck of the disorganised ship.

After some little time, he walked forward, and leant against one of the twenty-four pounders that was pointed out of the embrasure, the muzzle of which was on a level with, and intercepted by, his little head.

Adams, the quarter-master, observing the dangerous situation of the child, stepped forward. This was against the stipulations laid down by the mutineers, and Peters cried out to him—"Heave-to, Adams, or we fire!" Adams waved his hand in expostulation, and continued to advance. "Keep back," again cried Peters, "or by ——, we fire!"

"Not upon one old man, Peters, and he

unarmed," replied Adams ; " I'm not worth so much powder and shot." The man at the gun blew his match. " For God's sake, for your own sake, as you value your happiness and peace of mind, do not fire, Peters !" cried Adams, with energy, " or you'll never forgive yourself."

" Hold fast the match," said Peters ; " we need not fear one man ;" and as he said this, Adams had come up to the muzzle of the gun, and seized the boy, whom he snatched up in his arms.

" I only came forward, Peters, to save your own boy, whose head would have been blown to atoms if you had chanced to have fired the gun," said Adams, turning short round, and walking aft with the boy in his arms.

" God in Heaven bless you, Adams," cried Peters, with a faltering voice, and casting a look of fond affection at the child. The heart of the mutineer was at that moment softened by parental feelings, and he blew the priming off the touchhole of the gun, lest an accidental

spark should risk the life of his child, who was now aft with the officers and their party.

Reader, this little boy will be the hero of our tale.

CHAPTER III.

“ Roused discipline alone proclaims their cause,
And injured navies urge their broken laws.
Pursue we in his track the mutineer.”

BYRON.

MAN, like all other animals of a gregarious nature, is more inclined to follow than to lead. There are few who are endued with that impetus of soul, which prompts them to stand foremost as leaders in the storming of the breach, whether it be of a fortress of stone, or the more dangerous one of public opinion, when failure in the one case may precipitate them on the sword, and in the other consign them to the scaffold.

In this mutiny there were but few of the rare class referred to above:—in the ship whose movements we have been describing, not one, perhaps, except Peters. There were many boisterous, many threatening, but no one, except him, who was equal to the command, or to whom the command could have been confided. He was, on board of his own ship, the very life and soul of the mutiny. At the moment described at the end of the first chapter, all the better feelings of his still virtuous heart were in action; and, by a captain possessing resolution and a knowledge of human nature, the mutiny might have been suppressed; but Captain A., who perceived the anxiety of Peters, thought the child a prize of no small value, and as Adams brought him aft, snatched the boy from his arms, and desired two of the party of marines to turn their loaded musquets at his young heart,—thus intimating to the mutineers that he would shoot the child at the first sign of hostility on their part.

The two marines who had received this order, looked at each other in silence, and did not obey. It was repeated by the captain, who considered that he had hit upon a masterpiece of diplomacy. The officers expostulated; the officer commanding the party of marines turned away in disgust; but in vain: the brutal order was reiterated with threats. The whole party of marines now murmured, and consulted together in a low tone.

Willy Peters was the idol and plaything of the whole crew. He had always been accustomed to remain on board with his father, and there was not a man in the ship who would not have risked his life to have saved that of the child. The effect of this impolitic and cruel order was decisive. The Marines, with the serjeant at their head, and little Willy placed in security in the centre, their bayonets directed on the defensive, towards the captain and officers, retreated to the mutineers, whom they joined with three cheers, as the child was lifted over

the barricade of hammocks, and received into his father's arms.

"We must not submit to their terms, Sir," said the first-lieutenant.

"Any terms, any terms," answered the terrified captain: "tell them so, for God's sake, or they will fire. Adams, go forward, and tell them we submit."

This order was, however, unnecessary, for the mutineers, aware of the impossibility of any further resistance, had thrown down the barricade of hammocks, and, with Peters at their head, were coming aft.

"You consent, gentlemen, to consider yourselves under an arrest?" inquired Peters of the first-lieutenant and officers, without paying any attention to the captain.

"We do, we do," cried Captain A. "I hope you will not stain your hands with blood. Mr. Peters, I meant the child no harm."

"If you had murdered him, Captain A., you could not have injured him so much as you

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have injured his father," retorted Peters; "but fear not for your life, Sir; that is safe; and you will meet all the respect and attention to your wants that circumstances will permit. We war not with individuals."

It was a proud moment for Peters to see this man cringing before him, and receiving with thanks the promise of his life from one whom he had so cruelly treated. There was a glorious revenge in it, the full force of which could only be felt by the granting, not the receiving party: for it could only be appreciated by one who possessed those fine and honourable feelings, of which Captain A. was wholly destitute.

If the reader will consult the various records of the times which we are now describing, he will find that every respect was personally paid to the officers, although they were deprived of their arms. Some of the most obnoxious were sent on shore, and the intemperate conduct of others produced effects for which they

had only to thank themselves; but, on the whole, the remark made by Peters was strictly correct: "They warred not with individuals"—they demanded justice from an ungrateful country.

It is true that the demands in this mutiny were not so reasonable as in the preceding; but where is the *man* who can confine himself to the exact balance of justice when his own feelings are unwittingly thrown into the scale?

As I before stated, it is not my intention to follow up the details of this national disgrace, but merely to confine myself to that part which is connected with the present history. Peters, as delegate from his ship, met the others, who were daily assembled, by Parker's directions, on board of the Queen Charlotte, and took a leading and decided part in the arrangements of the disaffected fleet.

But Parker, the ringleader, although a man of talent, was not equal to the task he had undertaken. He lost sight of several important

features, necessary to insure success in all civil commotions; such as rapidity and decision of action, constant employment being found, and continual excitement being kept up, amongst his followers, to afford no time for reflection. Those who serve under an established government, know exactly their present weight in the scale of worldly rank, and the extent of their future expectations; they have accustomed themselves to bound their ambition accordingly: and feeling conscious that passive obedience is the surest road to advancement, are led quietly, here or there, to be slaughtered at the will and caprice of their superiors. But the leader of the disaffected against an established government has a difficult task. He has nothing to offer to his followers but promises. There is nothing on hand—all is expectation. If allowed time for reflection, they soon perceive that they are acting an humble part in a dangerous game; and that even though it be attended with success, in

all probability they will receive no share of the advantages, although certain of incurring a large proportion of the risk. The leader of a connected force of the above description rises to a dangerous height when borne up by the excitement of the time; but let it once be permitted to subside, and, like the aëronaut in his balloon from which the gas escapes while it is soaring in the clouds, he is precipitated from his lofty station, and gravitates to his own destruction.

He must be a wonderful man who can collect all the resources of a popular commotion, and bring it to a successful issue. The reason is obvious—everything depends upon the leader alone. His followers are but as the stones composing the arch of the bridge by which the gulf is to be crossed between them and their nominal superiors; he is the keystone, upon which the whole depends,—if completely fitted, rendering the arch durable and capable of bearing any pressure; but if too small in di-

mensions, or imperfect in conformation, rendering the whole labour futile, and occasioning all the fabric previously raised to be precipitated by its own weight, and dispersed in ruin and confusion.

This latter was the fate of the Mutiny at the Nore. The insurrection was quelled, and the ringleaders were doomed to undergo the utmost penalty of martial law. Among the rest, Peters was sentenced to death.

In the foremost part of the main-deck of a line of battle ship, in a square room, strongly bulkheaded, and receiving light from one of the ports, as firmly secured with an iron grating,—with no other furniture than a long wooden form—his legs in shackles, that ran upon a heavy iron bar lying on the deck—sat the unfortunate prisoner, in company with three other individuals, his wife, his child, and old Adams, the quarter-master. Peters was seated on the deck, supporting himself by leaning against the bulkhead. His wife was lying

beside him, with her face hidden in his lap. Adams occupied the form, and the child stood between his knees. All were silent, and the eyes of the three were directed towards one of the sad company, who appeared more wretched and disconsolate than the rest.

“My dear, dear Ellen!” said Peters, mournfully, as a fresh burst of grief convulsed her attenuated frame.

“Why, then, refuse my solicitations, Edward? If not for yourself, listen to me for the sake of your wife and child. Irritated as your father still may be, his dormant affection will be awakened, when he is acquainted with the dreadful situation of his only son; nay, his family pride will never permit that you should perish by so ignominious a death; and your assumed name will enable him, without blushing, to exert his interest, and obtain your reprieve.”

“Do not put me to the pain of again refusing you, my dearest Ellen. I desire to die, and my fate must be a warning to others. When I

reflect what dreadful consequences might have ensued to the country from our rebellious proceedings, I am thankful, truly thankful, to God, that we did not succeed. I know what you would urge—my wrongs, my undeserved stripes. I, too, would urge them; and when my conscience has pressed me hard, have urged them in palliation; but I feel that it is only in palliation, not in justification, that they can be brought forward. They are no more in comparison with my crime than the happiness of one individual is to that of the nation which I assisted to endanger, because one constituting a part of it had, unauthorized, oppressed me. No, no, Ellen, I should not be happy if I were not to atone for my faults; and this wretched life is the only atonement I can offer. But for you, and that poor child, my dearest and kindest, I should go to the scaffold rejoicing; but the thoughts—O God, strengthen and support me!" cried the unhappy man, hiding his face in his hands.

"Fear not for me, Edward. I feel here," said Ellen, laying her hand on her heart, "a conviction that we shall soon meet again. I will urge you no more, love. But the boy—the boy—Oh, Edward, what will become of that dear boy, when we are both gone?"

"Please God to spare my life, he'll never want a father," said old Adams, as the tears found a devious passage down the furrows of his weather-beaten face.

"What will become of him?" cried Peters, with energy. "Why, he shall retrieve his father's fault, wash out the stains in his father's character. He shall prove as liege a subject as I have been a rebellious one. He shall as faithfully serve his country as I have shamefully deserted it. He shall be as honest as I have been false; and oh, may he be as prosperous as I have been unfortunate—as happy as I have been miserable. Come hither, boy. By the fond hopes I entertain of pardon and peace above—by the Almighty, in whose presence I must shortly

tremble, I here devote thee to thy country—serve her bravely and faithfully. Tell me, Willy, do you understand me, and will you promise me this?”

The boy laid his head upon his father's shoulder, and answered in a low tone—“ I will ;” and then, after a short pause, added, “ but what are they going to do with you, father?”

“ I am going to die for my country's good, my child. If God wills it, may you do the same, but in a more honourable manner.”

The boy seemed lost in thought, and, after a short time, quitted his father's side, and sat down on the deck by his mother, without speaking.

Adams rose, and taking him up, said, “ Mayhap you have that to talk of which wants no listeners. I will take Willy with me, and give him a little air before I put him in his hammock. It's but a close hole, this. Good night to you both, though I'm afeard that's but a wish.”

But a wish indeed,—and it was the last that

was ever to close upon the unhappy Peters. The next morning was appointed for his execution. There are scenes of such consummate misery, that they cannot be pourtrayed without harrowing up the feelings of the reader,—and of these the climax may be found in a fond wife, lying at the feet of her husband during the last twelve hours of his mortal career. We must draw the curtain.

And now, reader, the title of this work, which may have puzzled you, will be explained ; for, intelligible as it may be to our profession, it may be a mystery to those who are not in his Majesty's service. The broad-headed arrow was a mark assumed at the time of the Edwards (when it was considered the most powerful weapon of attack), as distinguishing the property of the King ; and this mark has been continued down to the present day. Every article supplied to his Majesty's service from the arsenals and dock-yards is thickly studded with this

mark ; and to be found in possession of any property so marked, is a capital offence, as it designates that property to be the *King's own*.

When Adams left the condemned cell with Willy, he thought upon what had passed, and as Peters had devoted the boy to his King and country, he felt an irresistible desire to mark him. The practice of tattooing is very common in the navy ; and you will see a sailor's arm covered with emblems from the shoulder to the wrist ; his own initials, that of his sweetheart, the crucifix, Neptune, and mermaids being huddled together, as if mythology and scripture were one and the same thing. Adams was not long in deciding, and telling our little hero that his father wished it—he easily persuaded him to undergo the pain of the operation, which was performed on the fore-castle, by pricking the shape of the figure required with the points of needles, and rubbing the bleeding parts with wet gunpowder and ink. By these simple

means the form of a broad-headed arrow, or the King's mark, was, in the course of an hour, indelibly engraved upon the left shoulder of little Willy, who was then consigned to his hammock.

CHAPTER IV.

“ The strife was o’er, the vanquish’d had their doom ;
The mutineers were crushed, dispersed, or ta’en,
Or lived to deem the happiest were the slain.”

BYRON.

THE day broke serenely but brightly, and poured in a stream of light through the iron grating of the cell where Peters and his wife lay clasped in each other’s arms, not asleep, but torpid, and worn out with extreme suffering. Peters was the first to break the silence, and gently moved Ellen, as he called her by her name. She had not for some time lifted up her

head, which was buried in his bosom ; and she was not aware that the darkness had been dispelled. She raised her head at his summons, and, as the dazzling light burst upon her sunken eyes, so did the recollection that this was the fatal morning flash upon her memory.

With a shriek, she again buried her face in the bosom of her husband. "Ellen, as you love me," said Peters, "do not distress me in my last hour. I have yet much to do before I die, and require your assistance and support. Rise, my love, and let me write to my father ; I must not neglect the interest of our child."

She rose tremblingly, and, turning back from her face her beautiful hair, which had been for so many days neglected, and was now moistened with her tears, reached the materials required by her husband, who, drawing towards him the wooden form to serve him as a table, wrote the following letter, while his wife sat by him with a countenance of idiotic apathy and despair:—

“ DEAR FATHER,

“ Yes, still *dear* father,—Before you cast your eyes upon these characters, you will be childless.—Your eldest boy perished nobly in the field of honour: your youngest, and last, will this morning meet an ignominious, but deserved death on the scaffold. Thus will you be childless; but if your son does meet the fate of a traitor, still the secret is confined to you alone, and none will imagine that the unhappy Peters, ring-leader of a mutinous ship, was the scion of a race who have so long preserved an unblemished name. Fain would I have spared you this shock to your feelings, and have allowed you to remain in ignorance of my disgrace; but I have an act of duty to perform to you and to my child—towards you, that your estates may not be claimed, and pass away to distant and collateral branches;—towards my child, that he may eventually reclaim his rights. Father, I forgive you, I might say—but no—let all now be buried in oblivion; and, as you peruse these lines, and think on my

unhappy fate, shed a tear in memory of the once happy child you fondled on your knee, and say to your heart, 'I forgive him.'

"I have dedicated my boy to his king and country. If you forgive me, and mean to protect your grandchild, do not change the career in life marked out for him:—it is a solemn compact between my God and me; and you must fulfil this last earnest request of a dying man, as you hope for future pardon and bliss.

"His distracted mother sits by me; I would intreat you to extend your kindness towards her, but I fear she will soon require no earthly aid. Still, soothe her last moments with a promise to protect the orphan, and may God bless you for your kindness.

"Your affectionate son,

"EDWARD."

Peters had scarcely finished this letter when Adams, with the boy in his arms, was admitted.

"I come for final orders, Peters, and to tell you

what I did last night to this boy. He is real stuff,—never winced. You said he was to be the King's, and I thought you would like that he should be marked as such. There is no mistaking this mark, Peters," continued Adams, baring the boy's shoulder, and shewing the impression of the broad-headed arrow, which now appeared angry and inflamed, as it always is for some days after the operation. "I did not mention that I was going to do it, because Ellen then might not have liked it: but I hope you do."

"Many, many thanks," answered Peters; and opening his letter which was folded, but not sealed, he added a postscript, pointing out the mark by which the boy would be identified. "You could not have done me a greater favour, Adams; and now you must promise me one more, which is to look after my poor Ellen, when —"

"I understand, my good fellow, and I will," replied Adams. "There is the Chaplain outside, who is all ready for service if you would

like to see him," continued the old man, passing his hands over his humid eyes.

"Ask him to come in, Adams; he is a good man, and an honour to his profession. I shall be glad to see him."

Adams went to the door, and soon returned with the chaplain. He saluted Peters, who respectfully bowed to him, and said: "I have long made my peace with God and man, Sir, and am as well prepared to die, as sinful mortal can be—in faith and charity with all men. Many thanks to you, Sir, for your kindness; but, Sir, you may be of use here yet. Can you"—and his voice faltered,—“can you, Sir, help that poor young woman? Cannot you reason her into some kind of tranquillity, some degree of submission to God's will? Oh, do that, Sir, and you will confer a favour on me indeed."

The chaplain approached Ellen, who lay on the deck in a state of mental stupefaction, and, addressing her in mild accents, persuaded

her to rise and take a seat on the form; he kindly contrived to bring it forward to the iron-grated port, so that she could not witness the motions of Peters, and, with a low, yet energetic and persuasive voice, attempted to reason her into patience and resignation. His efforts were in vain. She occasionally looked upon him with a vacant stare, but her thoughts were elsewhere. During the period, Peters had time to shave himself, and dress in clean attire, preparatory to being summoned to his fate.

The time was approaching fast; one bell after eight o'clock, designating the half hour, had struck; at two bells (nine o'clock) he was to be summoned to his doom. The clergyman rose from his useless endeavours—"Let us pray," said he, and sank upon his knees.—Peters, Adams, and the child, followed his example; and, last of all, poor Ellen, who seemed to recover her recollection, sank on her knees, but, unable to keep her position, fell towards the clergyman, who, as he supported her in his arms, poured

forth a fervent and eloquent appeal in behalf of the one who was about to appear in the presence of his Maker, and of those who were left in tribulation behind. It was scarcely over when the door opened, and the provost-martial claimed his prisoner.

The prayer of the chaplain seemed to ring in Ellen's ears, and she remained supported by the worthy man, muttering parts of it at intervals, during which time the limbs of her husband were freed from the shackles. All was ready; and Peters, straining the child to his bosom in silence, and casting one look at his dear Ellen, who still remained in a state of stupefaction, denied himself a last embrace (though the effort wrung his heart), rather than awaken her to her misery. He quitted the cell, and the chaplain, quietly placing Ellen in the arms of Adams, followed, that he might attend and support Peters in his last moments.

The prisoner was conducted on the quarter-deck previously to being sent forward to execu-

tion. His sentence was read by Captain A——; and the remark may perhaps be considered uncharitable, but there certainly appeared to be an ill-concealed satisfaction in his countenance as he came to that part where it stated that the prisoner was to “suffer death.” Peters heard it read with firmness, and asked permission to address the ship’s company. This was at first refused by the captain, but, at the request of the officers, and the assurance of the chaplain that he would vouch for the language of Peters being such as would have a proper tendency to future subordination on the part of the ship’s company, it was assented to. Bowing first to the captain and officers, Peters turned to the ship’s company, who were assembled on the booms and gangway, and addressed them as follows:—

“Shipmates, the time may come when our country shall be at peace, and your services no longer be required. Then, when you narrate to your children the events of this unhappy

mutiny, do not forget to add instruction to amusement, by pointing out to them that it ended in the disgrace and death of the ring-leaders. Tell them that, in your presence, one of them acknowledged on the quarter-deck the justice of his sentence, and returned thanks to his Majesty for his kindness in pardoning others who had been led into the same error. Tell them to do their duty, to fight nobly for their King and country, and warn them by our example—”

At this moment Willy, who had eluded the vigilance of old Adams, who was occupied in supporting the inanimate Ellen, pushed his way between the legs of the marines, who were drawn up in ranks on the quarter-deck, and, running to his father, laid hold of the loose sailor's trousers in which he was attired, and looked anxiously and inquisitively in his face. Peters's voice faltered; he attempted to continue his address to the men, but could not; and waving his hand, and pointing to the child,

in mute explanation of the cause, after struggling in vain against the overflowings of a father's heart, he bent over the boy and burst into tears.

The effect was electrical. The shock was communicated to all; not an eye but was dimmed; sobs were heard in the crowd; the oldest officers turned away to conceal their emotions; the younger, and more fresh in heart, covered their faces, and leant against the bulwarks; the marines forgot their discipline, and raised their hands from their sides to wipe their eyes. Many a source, long supposed to be hermetically sealed, was re-opened,—many a spring long dry reflowed rapidly; even Captain A—— was moved.

By a singular coincidence, the grouping of the parties at this moment was nearly the same as when we first introduced our little hero to the reader—the officers and marines on the after part of the deck, the ship's company forward, and little Willy standing between the

two. Again he appears in the same position ;— but what a change of feeling had taken place ! As if he had been a little spirit of good, waving his fairy talisman, evil passions, which, in the former scene were let loose, had retired to their darkest recesses, and all the better feelings of humanity were called forth, and displayed in one universal, spontaneous, and unfeigned tribute to the melancholy and affecting scene.

The silence was first broken by Willy—
“ Where are you going, father ; and why do you wear that night-cap ? ”

“ I am going to sleep, child,—to an eternal sleep ! God bless and protect you,” said Peters, taking him up, and kissing him. “ And now Sir, I am ready,” continued Peters, who had recovered his self-possession ; “ Captain A—— I forgive you, as I trust to be forgiven myself. Mr. ——,” said he, addressing the first-lieutenant, “ take this child by the hand, and do not permit him to come forward—remember he is the “King’s Own.” Then, bowing to the

chaplain, who had scarcely recovered from the effects that the scene had produced upon him, and looking significantly at the provost-martial, Peters bent his steps forward by the gangway—the noose was fastened—the gun fired, and, in a moment, all was over.

Loud as was the report of the gun, those who were appointed to the unpleasant duty of running aft with the rope on the main-deck, which swung Peters to the yard-arm, heard a shriek that even that deafening noise could not overpower. It was the soul of Ellen joining that of her husband—and, before the day closed, their bodies were consigned to the same grave—

“Where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.”

CHAPTER V.

“Lord of himself, that heritage of woe.”

BYRON.

OUR novel may, to a certain degree, be compared to one of the pantomimes which rival theatres annually bring forth for the amusement of the holiday children. We open with dark and solemn scenes, introducing occasionally a bright image, which appears with the greater lustre from the contrast around it: and thus we proceed, until Harlequin is fairly pro-

vided with his wand, and despatched to seek his adventures by land and by sea. To complete the parallel, the whole should wind up with a blaze of light and beauty, till our dazzled eyes are relieved, and the illusion disappears, at the fall of the green curtain, which, like the "FINIS" at the end of the third volume, tells us that all is over.

We must, however, be allowed to recapitulate a little in this chapter, previously to launching our hero upon the uncertain and boisterous sea of human life. It will be necessary for the correct developement of the piece, that the attention of the reader should be called to the history of the grandfather of our hero.

Admiral De Courcy was the lineal descendant of an antient and wealthy family, of high aristocratic connection. He had the misfortune, at an early age, to lose his father, to be an only child, and to have a very weak and doting mother. Add to all these, that he was the heir to a large entailed property, and the reader will acknow-

ledge that even the best disposed child stood a fair chance of being spoiled.

But young De Courcy was not a well-disposed child: he was of a violent, headstrong, and selfish disposition, and was not easily to be checked by the firmest hand. He advanced to man's estate, the cruel tyrant of a fond and foolish mother, and the dislike of all around him. His restless disposition, backed by the persuasions of his mother to the contrary, induced him to enter into the naval service. At the time we are now describing, the name of the boy often appeared on the books of a man-of-war, when the boy himself was at school or at home with his friends: if there were any regulations to the contrary, they were easily surmounted by interest. The consequence was, that,—without any knowledge of his profession, without having commenced his career by learning to obey before he was permitted to command,—at the early age of eighteen years,

young De Courcy was appointed captain of a fine frigate ; and, as the power of a captain of a man-of-war was at that time almost without limit, and his conduct without scrutiny, he had but too favourable an opportunity of indulging his tyrannical propensities. His caprice and violence were unbounded, his cruelty odious, and his ship was designated by the sobriquet of " The Hell Afloat."

There are, however, limits to the longest tether ; and as no officer would remain in the ship, and the desertion of the men became so extensive, that a fine frigate lay useless and unmanned, the government at last perceived the absolute necessity of depriving of command one who could not command himself. The ship was paid off and even the interest of Captain De Courcy, powerful as it was, could not obtain further employment for him. Having for some time been in possession of his large property, Captain De Courcy retired to the

hall of his ancestors, with feelings of anger against the government, which his vindictive temper prompted him to indulge by the annoyance of all around him: and, instead of diffusing joy and comfort by the expenditure of his wealth, he rendered himself odious by avarice, —a vice the more contemptible, as it was unexpected at so early an age.

But, much as he was an object of abhorrence, he was more an object of pity. With a handsome exterior, and with fascinating manners, of high birth and connections, with a splendid fortune,—in short, with every supposed advantage that the world could give,—he was, through the injudicious conduct of a fond mother, whose heart he had broken, the most miserable of beings. He was without society, for he was shunned by the resident gentlemen in the neighbourhood. Even match-making mothers, with hearts indurated by interest, and with a string of tall daughters to provide for, thought the sacrifice too great, and shuddered at an alliance

with Captain De Courcy. Avoided by the tenants of his large estates, whose misfortunes met with no compassion, and whose inability to answer the demands of the rent-day were followed up with immediate distress and seizure,—abhorred by his own household, who, if their services were not required, vanished at his approach, or, if summoned, entered the door of his room trembling,—he was an isolated and unhappy being, a torment to himself and to others. Wise, indeed, was Solomon, when he wrote, that “he who spared the rod, spoiled the child.”

The monotony of a life whose sole negative enjoyment consisted in the persecution of others, induced Captain De Courcy to make occasional excursions to the different watering-places; and whether that, to a certain degree, he was schooled by banishment from society at home, or that he had no opportunity of displaying his diabolical temper, his prepossessing appearance and well known riches made him a great favourite in

these marts for beauty. An amiable girl was unfortunate enough to fix his attention ; and a hasty proposal was as hastily accepted by her friends, and quietly acquiesced in by herself. She married, and was miserable, until released from her heedless engagement by death.

There are those who excuse a violent temper in a man, and consider it no obstacle to happiness in the marriage life. Alas, may they never discover the fatal error in their own union ! Even with the best hearted and most fondly attached, with those who will lavish every endearment, acknowledge their fault, and make every subsequent effort to compensate for the irritation of the moment, violence of temper must prove the bane of marriage bliss. Bitter and insulting expressions have escaped, unheeded at the time, and forgotten by the offending party ; but, although forgiven, never to be forgotten by the other. Like barbed arrows, they have entered into the heart of her whom he had promised before God to love and to

cherish ; and remain there they must, for they cannot be extracted. Affection may pour balm into the wounds, and soothe them for the time ; and, while love fans them with his soft wings, the heat and pain may be unperceived ; but passion again asserts his empire, and upon his rude attack these ministering angels are forced from their office of charity, and woman, kind, devoted woman, looks inwardly with despair upon her wounded and festering heart.

Hurried as she was to an early tomb, the unfortunate wife of Captain De Courcy had still time to present him with two fine boys, whose infantine endearments soothed his violence, and, as long as they shewed no spirit of resistance, they were alternately fondled and frightened. But children are not blind ; and the scenes which continually occurred between their parents,—the tears of their mother, and the remarks made in their presence by the domestics,—soon taught them to view their father with dread. Captain De Courcy perceived that he was shunned by

his children, the only beings whom he had endeavoured (as far as his temper would permit) to attach to him. They were dismissed to school at a very early age, and were soon treated by their father in the same harsh manner as all those who had the misfortune to be under his baneful protection. They returned home at holiday time with regret; and the recommencement of their scholastic duties was a source of delight. The mother died, and all at home was desolate. The violence of their father seemed to increase from indulgence; and the youths, who were verging into manhood, proved that no small portion of the parent's fiery disposition had been transmitted to them, and shewed a spirit of resistance which ended in their ruin.

William, the eldest of the boys, was, as it were, by birthright, the first to fall a victim to his father's temper. Struck senseless and bleeding to the ground for some trifling indiscretion, as he lay confined to his bed for many sub-

sequent days, he formed the resolution of seeking his own fortune, rather than submit to hourly degradation. At the period at which this occurred, many years previously to the one of which we are now writing, the East-India Company had but a short time received its charter, and its directors were not the proud rulers which they have since become. It never was calculated that a company, originally consisting of a few enterprising merchants, could ever have established themselves (even by the most successful of mischievous arts) the controllers of an immense empire, independent of, and anomalous to, the constitution of England; or that privileges, granted to stimulate the enterprise of individuals, would have been the ground of a monopoly, which, like an enormous Incubus, should oppress the nation from the throne to the cottage. They gladly accepted the offers of all adventurers; and, at that period, there was as much eagerness on their part to secure the services of individuals, as there now is on the

part of applicants to be enrolled on the books of the company.

William, without acquainting his father, entered into an engagement with the company, signed it, and was shipped off, with many others, who, less fortunate, had been nefariously kidnapped for the same destination. He arrived in India, rose to the rank of captain, and fell in one of the actions that were fought at this time. The letter which William left on the table, directed to his father, informing him of the step he had been induced to take, was torn to atoms, and stamped upon with rage; and the bitter malediction of the parent was launched with dreadful vehemence upon the truant son, in the presence of the one who remained.

And yet there was one man, before whom this haughty and vindictive spirit quailed, and who had the power to soften, although not wholly to curb, his impetuosity,—one, who dared to tell him the truth, expose to him the folly and wickedness of his conduct, and meet the angry flash

of his eye with composure,—one whose character and office secured him from insult, and who was neither to be frightened nor diverted from his purpose of doing good. It was the vicar of the parish, who, much as he disliked the admiral, (for Captain De Courcy had latterly obtained that rank by seniority on the list), continued his visits to the hall, that he might appeal for the unfortunate. The admiral would willingly have shaken him off, but his attempts were in vain. The vicar was firm at his post, and often successfully pleaded the cause of his parishioners, who were most of them tenants of the admiral. He was unassisted in his parochial duties by the curate, a worthy, but infirm and elderly man, fast sinking into his grave, and whom, out of Christian charity, he would not remove from his situation, as it would have deprived him of the means of support.

Edward, the younger brother, naturally sought that happiness abroad which was denied him at home. The house of the curate was one

of his most favourite resorts, for the old man had a beautiful and only daughter,—poor Ellen, whose fate we have just recorded. It is sufficient for the present narrative to state, that these two young people loved, and plighted their troth; that for two years they met with joy, and parted with regret, until the approaching dissolution of the old curate opened their eyes to the dangerous position in which they were placed. He died; and Edward, who beheld her whom he loved thrown unprotected and penniless on the world, mustered up the courage of desperation, to state to his father the wishes of his heart.

A peremptory order to leave the house, or abandon Ellen, was the immediate result; and the indignant young man quitted the roof, and persuaded the unhappy and fond girl to unite herself to him by indissoluble ties, in a neighbouring parish, before the vicar had possession of the facts, or the opportunity to dissuade him from so imprudent a step. He immediately

proceeded to the hall, with a faint hope of appeasing the irritated parent; but his endeavours were fruitless, and the admiral poured forth his anathema against his only child.

Edward now took his wife to a village some miles distant; where, by their mutual exertions, they contrived for some time to live upon their earnings; but the birth of their first child, the hero of this tale, and the expenses attending her sickness, forced him at last (when all appeals to his father proved in vain) to accept the high bounty that was offered for men to enter into his Majesty's service,—which he did under the assumed name of Edward Peters.

CHAPTER VI.

— I disclaim all my paternal care,
Propinquity and property of blood.
The barbarous Scythian,
Or he that makes his generation messes
To gorge his appetite, shall to my bosom
Be as well neighbour'd, pitied, and relieved,
As him.

SHAKSPEARE.

IN a lofty room, the wainscotting of which was of dark oak, with a high mantel-piece, elaborately carved in the same wood, with groups of dead game and flowers, and a few choice pictures let into the pannels,—upon an easy chair, that once had been splendid with morocco and gold, sat a man of about fifty years of age; but his hair was grey, and his face was indented

with deep lines and furrows. He was listening with impatience to the expostulations of one who stood before him, and shifted his position from time to time, when more than usually annoyed with the subject. It was Admiral De Courcy, and the vicar of the parish, who was persuading him to be merciful.

The subject of this discourse was, however, dismissed by the entrance of a servant, who presented to the admiral, upon a large and massive salver, a letter, brought as he stated by a seafaring man. The admiral lifted up his glasses to examine the superscription—"From my worthless vagabond of a son!" exclaimed he, and he jerked the letter into the fire without breaking the seal.

"Surely, Sir," rejoined the vicar, "it would be but justice to hear what he has to offer in extenuation of a fault, too severely punished already. He is your only son, Sir, and why not forgive one rash act? Recollect, Sir, that

he is the heir to this property, which, being entailed, must of necessity devolve upon him."

"Curses on the bare thought," answered the admiral with vehemence. "I hope to starve him first."

"May the Almighty shew more mercy to you, Sir, when you are called to your account, than you have shewn to an imprudent and hasty child. We are told that we are to forgive, if we hope to be forgiven. Admiral De Courcy, it is my duty to ask you, do you expect (and if so, upon what grounds,) to be forgiven yourself?"

The admiral looked towards the window, and made no reply.

The letter, which had been thrown into the grate, was not yet consumed. It had lit upon a mass of not yet ignited coal, and lay there blackening in the smoke. The vicar perceived it, and, walking to the fire-place, recovered the letter from its perilous situation.

"If you do not choose to read it yourself, admiral; if you refuse to listen to the solicitations

of an only child, have you any objection that I should open the letter, and be acquainted with the present condition of a young man, who, as you know, was always dear to me?"

"None, none," replied the admiral, sarcastically. "You may read it, and keep it too, if you please."

The vicar, without any answer to this remark, opened the letter, which, as the reader may probably imagine, was the one written by Edward Peters on the morning of his execution.

"Merciful Heaven!" exclaimed the man of religion, as he sat down to recover from the shock he had received—"Unfortunate boy!"

The admiral turned round, astonished at the demeanour of the clergyman, and, (it would appear,) as if his conscience had pressed him hard, and that he was fearful that his cruel wish, expressed but a few minutes before, had been realized. He turned pale, but asked no questions. After a short time, the vicar rose, and, with a countenance of more indignation than

the admiral or others had ever seen, thus addressed him :—

“The time may come, Sir, nay, I prophesy that it *will* come, when the contents of this letter will cause you bitterly to repent your cruel and unnatural conduct to your son. The letter itself, Sir, I cannot intrust you with. In justice to others, it must not be put into your hands; and, after your attempt to commit it to the flames, and your observation that I might read and *keep it too*, I feel justified in retaining it. A copy of it, if you please, I will send you, Sir.”

“I want neither copy nor original, nor shall I read them if you send them, good Sir,” answered the admiral, pale with anger.

“Fare you well, then, Sir. May God turn your heart !”

So saying, the vicar left the room with a determination not to enter it again. His first inquiry was for the person who had brought the letter, and he was informed that he still waited

in the hall. It was old Adams, who had obtained leave of absence for a few days, that he might fulfil the last request of Peters. The clergyman here received a second shock, from the news of the death of poor Ellen, and listened with the deepest interest to Adams's straight-forward account of the whole catastrophe.

The first plan that occurred to the vicar was to send for the child, and take charge of him himself; but this was negatived not only by Peters's letter, but also by old Adams, who stated his determination to retain the child until claimed by legal authority. After mature deliberation, he considered that the child would be as much under an All-seeing Eye on the water, as on the land, and that at so early an age, he was probably as well under the charge of a trustworthy old man, like Adams, as he would be elsewhere. He, therefore, requested Adams to let him have constant accounts of the boy's welfare, and to apply to him for any

funds that he might require for his maintenance ; and, wishing the old man farewell, he set off for the vicarage, communing with himself as to the propriety of keeping the circumstance of the boy's birth a secret, or divulging it to his grandfather, in the hopes of eventually inducing him to acknowledge and to protect him.

CHAPTER VII.

To the seas presently went our lord admiral,
With knights courageous, and captains full good ;
The brave Earl of Essex, a prosperous general,
With him prepared to pass the salt flood.

At Plymouth speedily took they ship valiantlye,
Braver ships never were seen under sayle,
With their fair colours spread, and streamers o'er their head,
Now, bragging foemen, take heed of your tale.

Old Ballad, 1596.

MANY and various were the questions that were put by our little hero to Adams and others, relative to the fate of his parents. That they were both dead was all the information that he could obtain, for, to the honour of human nature, there was not one man, in a ship's company composed of several hundred, who had the cruelty to tell the child that his

father had been hanged. It may, at first, appear strange to the reader, that the child himself was not aware of the fact, from what he had witnessed on the morning of execution ; but it must be recollected that he had never seen an execution before, and had therefore nothing from which to draw such an inference. All he knew was, that his father was on the quarter-deck, with a night-cap on, and that he told him that he was going to sleep. The death of his mother, whose body he was not permitted to see, was quite as unintelligible, and the mystery which enveloped the whole transaction added no little to the bereavement of the child, who, as I have before stated, from his natural talent and peculiar education, was far more reflective and advanced than children usually are.

Adams returned to his little charge with pleasure : he had now a right to adopt the child, and consider him as his own. In the ship the boy was such an object of general sympathy, that not only many of the men, but some of the

officers would gladly have taken him, and have brought him up. The name of his father was, by general consent, never mentioned, especially as Adams informed the officers and men that Peters had been a "*purser's name*," adopted by the child's father, and that although the clergyman had stated this, he had not entrusted him with the real name that the child was entitled to bear. As, therefore, our little hero was not only without parents, but without name, he was rechristened by Adams, by the cognomen of the "King's Own," and by that title, or his christian name, Willy, was ever afterwards addressed, both by officers and men.

There is an elasticity supplied to the human mind by unerring wisdom, that enables us, however broken down by the pressure of misfortune, to recover our cheerfulness after a while, and resign ourselves to the decrees of Heaven. It consoles the widow—it supports the bereaved lover, who had long dwelt upon anticipated

bliss—it almost reconciles to her lot the fond and forsaken girl, whose heart is breaking.

Unusually oppressed, as Willy was, with the loss of those to whom he had so fondly clung from his birth, in a few months he recovered his wonted spirits, and his cheeks again played with dimples, as his flashing eye beamed from under his long eye-lashes. He attached himself to the old quarter-master, and seldom quitted him—he slept in his hammock, he stood by his side when he was on deck, at his duty, steering the ship, and he listened to the stories of the good old man, who soon taught him to read and write. For three years, thus passed his life, at the end of which period he had arrived at the age of nine years.

After a long monotony of blockade service, the ship was ordered to hoist the flag of a commodore, who was appointed to the command of an expedition against the western coast of France, to create a diversion in favour of the Vendean Chiefs. Captain A——, whether it

was that he did not like to receive a superior officer on board of his ship, or that he did not admire the service upon which she was to be employed, obtained permission to leave his ship for a few months, for the restoration of his health, to the great joy of the officers and crew ; and an acting captain, of well known merit, was appointed in his stead.

The squadron of men-of-war and transports was collected, the commodore's flag hoisted, and the expedition sailed with *most secret* orders, which, as usual, were as well known to the enemy, and every body in England, as they were to those by whom they were given. It is the characteristic of our nation, that we scorn to take any unfair advantage, or reap any benefit, by keeping our intentions a secret. We imitate the conduct of that English tar, who, having entered a fort, and meeting a Spanish officer without his sword, being providently supplied with two cutlasses himself, immediately offered him one, that they might engage on fair terms.

The idea is generous, but not wise. But I rather imagine that this want of secrecy arises from all matters of importance being arranged by cabinet councils. In the multitude of counsellors there may be wisdom, but there certainly is not secrecy. Twenty men have probably twenty wives, and it is therefore twenty to one but the secret transpires through that channel. Further, twenty men have twenty tongues, and much as we complain of women not keeping secrets, I suspect that men deserve the odium of the charge quite as much, if not more, than women do. On the whole, it is forty to one against secrecy, which, it must be acknowledged, are long odds.

On the arrival of the squadron at the point of attack, a few more days were thrown away,—probably upon the same generous principle of allowing the enemy sufficient time for preparation. Troops had been embarked, with the intention of landing them, to make a simultaneous attack with the shipping. Combined

expeditions are invariably attended with delay, if not with disagreement. An officer, commanding troops, who, if once landed, would be as decided in his movements as Lord Wellington himself, does not display the same decision when out of his own element. From his peculiar situation on board,—his officers and men distributed in different ships,—the apparent difficulties of debarkation, easily remedied and despised by sailors, but magnified by landmen,—from the great responsibility naturally felt in a situation where he must trust to the resources of others, and where his own, however great, cannot be called into action,—he will not decide without much demur upon the steps to be taken: although it generally happens, that the advice originally offered by the naval commandant has been acceded to. Unless the military force required is very large, marines should invariably be employed, and placed under the direction of the naval commander.

After three or four days of *pros* and *cons*,

the enemy had completed his last battery, and as there was then no rational excuse left for longer delay, the debarkation took place, without any serious loss on our side, except that of one launch, full of the — regiment, which was cut in halves by the enemy's shot. The soldiers, as they sank in the water, obeyed the orders of the sergeant, and held up their cartouch-boxes, that they might not be wetted two seconds sooner than necessary,—held fast their musquets,—and, without stirring from the gunnels of the boat, round which they had been stationed, went down in as good order as could be expected, each man at his post, with his bayonet fixed. The sailors, not being either so heavily caparisoned, or so well drilled, were guilty of a *sauve qui peut*, and were picked up by other boats. The officer of the regiment stuck to his men, and it is to be hoped that he marched the whole of his brave detachment to Heaven, as he often had before to church. But we must leave the troops to form on the beach as well as they

can, and the enemy's shot will permit, and retire on board.

The commodore's arrangement had been punctually complied with. The ships that were directed to cover the landing of the troops, knocked down many of the enemy, and not a great many more of our own men. The stations of the other ships were taken with a precision deserving of the highest encomiums; and there is no doubt, that, had not the enemy had the advantage of stone walls, they must have had the worst of it, and would have been well beaten.

The commodore himself, of course, took the post of honour. Anchored with springs on his cables, he alternately engaged a heavy battery on his starboard bows, a much heavier, backed by a citadel, throwing shells on his beam, and a masqued battery on his quarter, which he had not reckoned upon. The latter was rather annoying, and the citadel threw shells with most disagreeable precision. He had almost as much

to do as Lord Exmouth at Algiers, although the result was not so fortunate.

A ship engaging at anchor, with very little wind, and that wind lulled by the percussion of the air from the report of the guns, as it always is, has the disadvantage of not being able to disengage herself of the smoke, which rapidly accumulates and stagnates as it were between the decks. Under these circumstances you repeatedly hear the order passed upon the main and lower deck of a line-of-battle ship, to point the guns two points abaft the beam, point-blank, and so on. In fact, they are as much in the dark as to external objects, as if they were blind-folded; and the only comfort to be derived from this serious inconvenience, is, that every man is so isolated from his neighbour that he is not put in mind of his own danger by witnessing the death of those around him, for they may fall three or four feet from him without his perceiving it:—so they continue to fire as directed, until they are

either sent down to the cock-pit themselves, or have a momentary respite from their exertions, when, choaked with smoke and gunpowder, they go aft to the scuttle-butt, to remove their parching thirst. So much for the lower and main-deck. We will now ascend to the quarter-deck, where we shall find old Adams at the conn, and little Willy standing behind him.

The smoke is not so thick here, but that you may perceive the commodore on the poop, walking a step or two to starboard, and then turning short round to port. He is looking anxiously through his glass at the position of the troops, who are ashore to storm the batteries, hoping to see a diversion in our favour made by them, as the affair becomes serious. By a singular coincidence, the commandant of the troops on shore is, with his telescope, looking anxiously at the shipping, hoping the same thing from the exertions of the navy. The captain of marines lies dead upon the poop; both his legs have been shot off by a spent

shot—he is left there as no surgeon can help him ; and there are two signal men lying dead alongside him.

On the hammock-nettings of the quarter-deck stands the acting captain of the ship, erect, and proud in bearing, with an eye of defiance and scorn as he turns towards the enemy. His advice was disregarded ; but he does his duty proudly and cheerfully. He is as cool and unconcerned, as if he were watching the flying-fish as they rise from the bows of the ship, when running down the tropics, instead of the enemy's shot, as they splash in the water alongside, or tear open the timbers of the vessel, and the bodies of his crew. The men still ply their half-manned guns ; but they are exhausted with fatigue, and the bloody deck proves that many have been dismissed from their duty. The first-lieutenant is missing ; you will find him in the cock-pit—they have just finished taking up the arteries of his right arm, which has been amputated ; and the

Scotch surgeon's assistant, who for many months bewailed the want of practice, and who, for having openly expressed his wishes on that subject, had received a sound thrashing from the exasperated midshipmen, is now complimenting the fainting man upon the excellent stump that they have made for him : while fifty others, dying or wounded, with as much variety as Homer's heroes, whose blood, trickling from them in several rivulets, pours into one general lake at the lowest level of the deck, are anxiously waiting their turn, and distract the purser's steward by their loud calls, in every direction at the same time, for the tin-pot of water, with which he is relieving their agonising thirst.

A large shark is under the counter ; he is so gorged with human flesh, that he can scarcely move his tail in the tinged water ; and he now hears the sullen plunges of the bodies, as they are launched through the lower-deck port, with

perfect indifference. “ Oh ! what a glorious thing’s a battle.”

But to return to our particular narrative. As we mentioned before, the citadel threw shells with remarkable precision, and every man who had been killed on the quarter-deck of the commodore’s ship, towards which the attention of the enemy was particularly directed, had been laid low by these horrible engines of modern warfare. The action still continued, although the fire on both sides had evidently slackened, and the commodore’s glass had at several intervals been fruitlessly directed towards the troops on shore, when accident brought about a change in favour of our countrymen. Through some unknown cause, the magazine of the enemy’s largest battery exploded, and buried the fabric with its tenants in one mass of ruin. The enemy were panic-struck with their misfortune—our troops and sailors inspired with fresh courage—and the fire was recommenced with three cheers and redoubled vigour. The troops pushed on, and

succeeded in taking possession of the masked battery, which had so long and so effectually raked the commodore.

A few minutes after this had occurred, the citadel recommenced its fire, and a shell, descending with that terrific hissing peculiar to itself alone, struck the main-bitts on the quarter-deck, and, rolling aft, exploded. Its fragments scattered death around, and one piece took the hat off the head of little Willy, who was standing before Adams, and then buried itself in the old man's side. He staggered forward, and fell on the coils of rope, near the companion-hatch, and when the men came to assist him below, the pain of moving was so intense, that he requested to be left where he was, that he might quietly breathe his last.

Willy sat down beside his old friend, holding his hand.—“A little water, boy—quick, quick!” It was soon procured by the active and affectionate child; who, indifferent to the scene

around him, thought only of administering to the wants, and alleviating the misfortune, of his dearest friend. Adams, after he had drunk, turned his head round, apparently revived, and said, in a low and catching voice, as if his powers were fast escaping, "Willy, your father's name was not Peters—I do not know what it was; but there is a person who does, and who takes an interest in your welfare—he lives in—"

At this moment another shell bounded through the rigging, and fell within a few feet of the spot where Willy and old Adams were speaking. Willy, who was seated on a coil of rope, supporting the head of his benefactor, no sooner perceived the shell as it rolled towards the side, with its fuse pouring out a volume of smoke, than, recollecting the effects of the former explosion, rather than the danger of the attempt, he ran towards it, and not being able to lift it, sank down on his knees, and, with astonishing agility, succeeded in rolling it over-

board, out of the larboard entering-port, to which it was near. The shell plunged in the water, and, before it had descended many feet, exploded with a concussion that was communicated to the ship fore and aft. Our hero then resumed his station by the side of Adams, who had witnessed what had taken place.

“You have begun well, my boy,” said the old man, faintly. “There’s ne’er a man in the ship would have done it. Kiss me, boy.”

The child leaned over the old man, and kissed his cheek, clammy with the dews of death. Adams turned a little on one side, uttered a low groan, and expired.

CHAPTER VIII.

Now dash'd upon the billow,
Our opening timber's creak,
Each fears a watery pillow.

• * * *

To cling to slippery shrouds
Each breathless seaman crowds,
As she lay
Till the day
In the Bay of Biscay O.

Sea Song.

As it will only detain the narrative, without being at all necessary for its developement, I shall not dwell upon the results of the engagement, which was soon after decided, with very indifferent success on our side. The soldiers were re-embarked, the ships hauled out of reach of the enemy's guns, and a council of war summoned—on which it was agreed, nem. con., that no more was to be done. The despatches were

sent home—they certainly differed a little, but that was of no consequence. The sum total of killed and wounded was excessively gratifying to the nation, as it proved that there had been hard fighting. By the by, John Bull is rather annoying in this respect: he imagines that no action can be well fought unless there is a considerable loss. Having no other method of judging of the merits of an action, he appreciates it according to the list of killed and wounded. A merchant *in toto*, he computes the value of an object by what it has cost him, and imagines that what is easily and cheaply obtained cannot be of much value. The knowledge of this peculiar mode of reasoning on his part, has very often induced officers to put down very trifling *contusions*, such as a prize-fighter would despise, to swell up the sum total of the loss to the aggregate of the honest man's expectations.

To proceed. As usual in cases of defeat, a small degree of accusation and recrimination

took place. The army thought that the navy might have beaten down stone ramparts, ten feet thick; and the navy wondered why the army had not walked up the same ramparts, which were thirty feet perpendicular. Some of the ships accused others of not having had a sufficient number of men killed and wounded; and the boats' crews, whenever they met on shore, fought each other desperately, as if it were absolutely necessary, for the honour of the country, that more blood should be spilt. But this only lasted three weeks, when a more successful attempt made them all shake hands, and wonder what they had been squabbling about.

There was, however, one circumstance, which occurred during the action, that had not been forgotten. It had been witnessed by the acting captain of the ship, and had been the theme of much comment and admiration among the officers and men. This was the daring feat of our little hero, in rolling the shell over the side. Captain M——, (the new commander) as soon as his

more important avocations would permit, made inquiries among the officers (being himself a stranger in the ship), relative to Willy. His short but melancholy history was soon told; and the disconsolate boy was summoned from under the half-deck, where he sat by the body of Adams, which, with many more, lay sewed up in its hammock, and covered over with the union-jack, waiting for the evening, to receive the rites of Christian burial, before being committed to the deep.

Knowing that Adams had been his only protector, a feeling of compassion for the bereaved and orphan boy, and admiration of his early tokens of bravery, induced Captain M——, who never formed a resolution in haste, or abandoned it if once formed, to take the boy under his own protection, and to place him as an officer on that quarter-deck upon which he had so distinguished himself. Willy, in obedience to orders received, stood by the captain, with his hat in his hand.

"What is your name, my boy?" said the captain, passing a scrutinizing glance over his upright and well-proportioned figure.

"Willy, Sir."

"And what's your other name?"

"King's Own, Sir."

This part of the boy's history was now explained by the second-lieutenant, who was in command, in consequence of the first-lieutenant being wounded.

"He must have a name," replied the captain. "William King's Own will not do. Is he on the books?"

"No, Sir, he is not; shall I put him down as William Jones, or William Smith?"

"No, no, those are too common. The boy has neither father, mother, nor name, that we know of: as we may, therefore, have a choice of the latter for him, let it be a good one. I have known a good name make a man's fortune with a novel-reading girl. There is a romance

in the boy's history ; let him have a name somewhat romantic also."

" Ay, ay, Sir," replied the lieutenant—" here, marine, tell my boy to bring up one of the volumes of the novel in my cabin."

The book made its appearance on the quarter-deck. " Perhaps, Sir, we may find one here," said the lieutenant, presenting the book to the captain.

The captain smiled as he took the book. " Let us see," said he, turning over the leaves—" ' Delamere !' that's too puppyish. ' Fortescue !' don't like that. ' Seymour !' Yes, that will do. It's not too fine, yet aristocratic and pretty. Desire Mr. Hinchin, the clerk, to enter him on the books as Mr. William Seymour, midshipman. And now, youngster, I will pay for your outfit, and first year's mess : after which I hope your pay and prize-money will be sufficient to enable you to support yourself. Be that as it may, as long as you do credit to my patronage, I shall not forget you."

Willy, with his straw hat in one hand, and a supererogatory touch of his curly hair with the other, made a scrape with his left leg, after the manner and custom of seafaring people—in short, he made the best bow that he could, observing the receipt that had been given him by his departed friend Adams. D'Egville might have turned up his nose at it; but Captain —— was perfectly satisfied: for, if not an elegant, it certainly was a grateful bow.

Our young officer was not sent down to mess in the berth of the midshipmen. His kind and considerate captain was aware, that a lad who creeps in at the hawse-holes, *i. e.*, is promoted from before the mast, was not likely to be favourably received in the midshipmen's mess, especially by that part of the community who, from their obscure parentage, would have had least reason to complain. He was, therefore, consigned to the charge of the gunner.

Sincere as were the congratulations of the officers and men, Willy was so much affected with the loss of his fond guardian, that he re-

ceived them with apathy, and listened to the applause bestowed upon his courage with tears that flowed from the remembrance of the cause which had stimulated him to the deed. At the close of the day, he saw the body of his old friend committed to the deep, with quivering lips and aching brow,—and, as it plunged into the clear wave, felt as if he was left alone in the world, and had no one to love and to cling to.

We do not give children credit for the feelings which they possess, because they have not, at their early age, acquired the power of language to express them correctly. Treat a child as you would an equal, and, in a few months, you will find that the reason of his having until then remained childish, was because he had heretofore been treated as a being of inferior capacity and feelings. True it is, that at an early age the feelings of children are called forth by what we consider as trifles; but we must recollect, in humility, that our own pursuits are as vain, as trifling, and as

selfish—"We are but children of a larger growth."

The squadron continued to hover on the French coast, with a view of alarming the enemy, and of making a more fortunate attempt, if opportunity occurred. Early in the morning of the fourth day after Willy had been promoted to the quarter-deck, a large convoy of *chasse-marées* (small coasting vessels, lugger-rigged) were discovered rounding a low point, not three miles from the squadron. A general signal to chase was immediately thrown out, and in half an hour the English men-of-war were in the midst of them, pouring broadside after broadside upon the devoted vessels, whose sails were lowered in every direction, in token of submission. The English men-of-war reminded you of so many hawks, pouncing upon a flight of small birds; and the vessels, with their lowered sails just flapping with the breeze, seemed like so many victims of their rapacity, who lay fluttering on the ground, disabled, or paralysed with terror.

Many escaped into shoal water, others ran ashore, some were sunk, and about twenty taken possession of by the ships of the squadron. They proved to be part of a convoy, laden with wine, and bound to the Garonne.

One of the *chasse-marées* being a larger vessel than the rest, and laden with wine of a better quality, was directed by the commodore to be sent to England; the casks of wine on board of the others were hoisted into the different ships, and distributed occasionally to the crews. Captain M—— thought that the departure of the prize to England would be a favourable opportunity to send our hero to receive his outfit, as he could not well appear on the quarter-deck as an officer without his uniform. He therefore directed the master's mate, to whose charge the prize was about to be confided, to take William with him, and wrote to his friends at Portsmouth, whither the vessel was directed to proceed, to fit him out with the requisite articles, and send him back

by the first ship that was directed to join the squadron. The prize was victualled, the officer received his written orders, was put on board with our hero and three men, and parted company with the squadron.

The master's-mate who was directed to take the vessel to Portsmouth, was the spurious progeny of the first-lieutenant of a line-of-battle ship, and a young woman who attended the bumboat, which supplied the ship's company with necessities, and luxuries, if they could afford to pay for them. The class of people who obtain their livelihood by these means, and who are entirely dependent upon the navy for their subsistence, are naturally anxious to secure the goodwill of the commanding officers of the ships, and usually contrive to have on their establishment a pretty-looking girl, who, although very reserved to the junior officers of the ship, is all smiles to the first-lieutenant, and will not stand upon trifles for the benefit of her employer. Beauty for men—gold for

women ! Such are the glittering baits employed, in this world, to entice either sex from the paths of duty or discretion.

The service was indebted to this species of bribery for the officer in question. The interest of his supposed father was sufficient to put him on the quarter-deck ; and the profits of his mother, who, having duly served her apprenticeship, had arrived to the dignity of bumboat woman herself, and was a fat, comely matron, of about forty years of age, were more than sufficient to support him in his inferior rank. His education and natural abilities were not, however, of that class to procure him either friends or advancement ; and he remained in the capacity of master's-mate, and was likely long to continue so, unless some such event as a general action should include him in a promotion which would be regulated by seniority. He was a mean looking, vulgar little man, with a sharp face and nose—the latter very red, from the constant potations of not only his own allowance, but

of that of every youngster in the ship whom he could bully or cajole.

His greatest pride and his constant study was "slang," in which he was no mean proficient. He always carried in his pocket a colt (*i. e.*, a foot and a half of rope, knotted at one end, and whipped at the other), for the benefit of the youngsters, to whom he was a most inordinate tyrant. He could *fudge* a day's work, which he sent in with the rest of the midshipmen, and which proofs of theoretical knowledge of their profession were in those days little attended to; but he was very ignorant, and quite unfit to take charge of any vessel. Captain M——, who, as we before stated, had joined the ship as acting captain, and had not had time to ascertain the merits or demerits of the officers, had given the prize to his charge because he was the senior mate of the ship.

The prize had scarcely trimmed her sails and shaped her course, when Mr. Bullock, the mas-

ter's-mate, called our hero to him, and addressed him in the following elegant phraseology :—

“ Now, you rebellious spawn—touch your hat, you young whelp”—(knocking off poor Willy's only hat, which flew to leeward, and went overboard)—“ Mind what I say, for I mean to be as good as a father to you. You're not an officer yet—and if you were, it would be all the same—so no capers, no airs. You see I've only three men in the vessel besides myself; they are in three watches : so your duty will be to attend upon me in the cabin. You'll mull my claret—I always drinks a noggin every half hour to keep the wind out, and if it an't ready and an't good,—do you see this ?”—(taking the colt out of his pocket.)—“ Stop, you'd better feel it at once, and then, when you knows what the taste of it is, you'll take care how you're slack in stays.” So saying, he administered three or four hearty cuts on the back and shoulders of our hero, who had been sufficiently drilled into the manners

and customs of a man-of-war, to know the value of the proverb, "The least said, the soonest mended."

A spigot had been already inserted into one of the casks of claret which were lashed on deck ; and, as the small vessel was very uneasy in the heavy swell of the Bay of Biscay, our hero had sufficient employment in watching the pot of claret, and preventing it from being upset by the motion of the vessel, as it was constantly heating on the stove in the cabin. This potation was regularly presented by Willy every half hour, as directed, to his commanding officer, who, if it was too sweet, or not sweet enough, or if he could not drink the whole, invariably, and much to the annoyance of our hero, threw the remainder into his face, telling him that that was his share of it.

This arrangement continued in full force for three days and three nights—for Willy was roused up five or six times every night to administer the doses of mulled claret, which

Mr. Bullock had prescribed for himself, who seemed, thin and meagre as he was, to be somewhat like a bamboo in his structure, (*i. e.* hollow from top to bottom), as if to enable him to carry the quantity of fluid that he poured down his throat during the twenty-four hours. As for intoxicating him, that appeared to be impossible: from long habit, he seemed to be like a stiff ship that careened to her bearings, and would sooner part company with her masts than heel any further.

On the fourth day, a strong gale sprang up from the north-west, and the sea ran very high. The *chasse marée*, never intended to encounter the huge waves of the Bay of Biscay, but to crawl along the coast and seek protection from them on the first indication of their fury,—labouring with a heavy cargo, not only stowed below, but on the decks,—was not sufficiently buoyant to rise on the summits of the waves, which made a clean breach over her, and the men became exhausted with the wet and the

inclemency of the season. On the third day of the gale, and seventh since they had parted company with the fleet, a squall brought the mainmast by the board ; the foresail was lowered to close reef, when a heavy sea struck the vessel, and pouring a torrent over her decks, swept overboard the three men who were forward reefing the sail. Mr. Bullock, the master's-mate, was at the helm—Willy, as usual, down below, attending the mulled claret, which had been more than ever in request since the bad weather had come on.

The mate quitted the helm, and ran forward to throw a rope to the seamen, who were struggling in the water with the wreck to leeward. He threw one, which was seized by two of them, (the other had sunk) ; and as soon as they had hold of it, and it became *taught* from their holding on, he perceived to his dismay that he had stood in the remaining part of the coil, and that it had encircled itself several times round his body, so that the men were hauling him over-

board. "Let go, let go, or I'm overboard!" was a useless exclamation to drowning men; they held on, and the mate too held on by the rigging for his life,—the efforts of the drowning men dragging him at last from off his legs, and keeping his body in a horizontal position, as they hauled at his feet, and he clung in desperation to the lee-shrouds. "Willy, Willy, a knife—quick, quick!" roared the mate in his agony. Willy, who, hearing his name called, and followed up by the "quick, quick," had no idea that anything but the mulled claret could demand such unusual haste, stopped a few seconds to throw in the sugar and stir it round before he answered the summons. He then started up the hatchway with the pot in his hand.

But these few seconds had decided the fate of Mr. Bullock, and as Willy's head appeared up the hatchway, so did that of Mr. Bullock disappear as he sank into a grave so dissonant to his habits. He had been unable to resist any

longer the united force of the drowning men, and Willy was just in time to witness his submersion, and find himself more destitute than ever. Holding on by the shroud with one hand, with the pot of mulled claret in the other, Willy long fixed his eyes on the spot where his tyrannical shipmate had disappeared from his sight, and, forgetting his persecution, felt nothing but sorrow for his loss. Another sea, which poured over the decks of the unguided vessel, roused him from his melancholy reverie, and he let go the pot, to cling with both hands to the rigging as the water washed over his knees,—then, seizing a favourable opportunity, he succeeded in regaining the cabin of the vessel, where he sat down and wept bitterly—bitterly for the loss of the master's mate and men, for he had an affectionate and kind heart—bitterly for his own forlorn and destitute situation. Old Adams had not forgotten to teach him to say his prayers, and Willy had been accustomed to read the bible, which the old man explained to the best

of his ability. The vessel laboured and groaned as she was buffeted by the waves—the wind howled, and the sea struck her trembling sides and poured over her decks. In the midst of this wild discord of the elements, the small voice of the kneeling child, isolated from the rest of the world, and threatened soon to be removed from it, was not unheard or unheeded by an omniscient and omnipotent God, who has said that not a sparrow should fall to the ground without his knowledge, and has pointed out of how much more value are we than many sparrows.

Willy ended his devotions and his tears ; and, feeling wet and cold, recollected that what would warm his departed friend the mate, would probably have the same effect upon him. He crawled up the companion-hatch with another tin pot, and having succeeded in obtaining some wine from the cask, returned to the cabin. Having warmed it over the fire, and sugared it according to the well-practised receipt of

Mr. Bullock, he drank more of it than, perhaps, in any other situation, he would have done, and, lying down in the standing bed-place at the side of the cabin, soon fell into a sound sleep.

CHAPTER IX.

And there he went ashore without delay,
Having no custom-house nor quarantine
To ask him awkward questions on the way,
About the time and place where he had been :
He left his ship to be hove down next day.

Don Juan.

THE prize vessel, at the time when she carried away her masts, had gained considerably to the northward of Ushant, although the master's mate, from his ignorance of his profession, was not aware of the fact. The wind, which now blew strongly from the N. W. drove the shattered bark up the Channel, at the same time gradually nearing her to the French coast. After twenty-four hours' driving before the storm,

during which Willy never once awoke from his torpor, the vessel was not many leagues from the port of Cherbourg. It was broad daylight when our hero awoke; and, after some little time necessary to chase away the vivid effects of a dream, in which he fancied himself to be on shore, walking in the fields with his dear mother, he recollected where he was, and how he was situated. He ascended the companion-ladder, and looked around him. The wind had nearly spent its fury, and was subsiding fast, but the prospect was cheerless—a dark wintry sky and rolling sea, and nothing living in view except the sea-bird that screamed as it skimmed over the white tops of the waves. The mizen of the vessel was still hoisted up, but the sheet had disengaged itself from the belaying-pin, and the sail had been rent from the bolt-rope by the storm. Part of it was blown away, and the rest, jagged and tattered at its extremities, from constant buffeting, flapped “mournfully to and fro” with the heavy rolling of the vessel.

Willy, holding only the companion-hatch, scanned the horizon in every point of the compass, in hopes of succour, but for a long while in vain. At last his keen eye detected a small vessel, under a single close-reefed sail, now rising on the tops of the waves, now disappearing in the deep trough of the sea. She was sloop-rigged, and running down towards him.

In a quarter of an hour she had neared to within a mile, and Willy perceived, with delight, that the people were on deck, and occasionally pointing towards him. He ran down below, and opening the chest of Mr. Bullock, which was not locked, took a liberty which he would never have dared to contemplate during that worthy officer's lifetime, viz. that of putting forth one of his two best white shirts, reserved for special occasions. This he took on deck, made it fast to a boat-hook staff, and hoisted as a signal of distress. He did also mechanically lift his hand to his head with the intention of waving his hat, but he was reminded, by not finding it there,

that it had been the first votive offering which had been made to appease the implacable deities presiding over the winds and waves. The vessel closed with him, hove to, to windward, and, after some demur, a small boat, capable of holding three persons, was hoisted over the gunnel, and two hands jumping into her, rowed under the stern of the wreck.

“ You must jump, my lad—there’s no going along side a craft, without any sail to steady her, in such a sea as this. Don’t be afraid. We’ll pick you up.”

Willy, who had little fear in his composition, although he could not swim, leaped from the taffrail of the vessel into the boiling surge, and immediately that he rose to the surface was rescued by the men, who, seizing him by the waistband of the trowsers, hauled him into the boat, and threw him down in the bottom under the thwarts. Then, without speaking, they resumed their oars, and pulled to the other vessel, on board of which they succeeded in establishing our hero

and themselves, although the boat was stove in the attempt, and cast adrift as useless.

Willy's teeth chattered, and his whole frame trembled with the cold, as he went aft to the captain of the sloop, who was sitting on deck wrapped up in a rough white great coat, with his pipe in his mouth. The captain was a middle-sized, slightly made young man, apparently not more than twenty-five years old. His face was oval, with a remarkably pleasing expression; his eyes small and brilliant: and, notwithstanding the roughness of his outward attire, there was a degree of precision in the arrangement of his hair and whiskers, which proved that with him neatness was habitual. He had a worsted mitten on his left hand; the right, which held his pipe, was bare, and remarkably white and small. Perceiving the situation of the boy, he called to one of the men—"Here, Phillips, take this poor devil down, and put something dry on him, and give him a glass of brandy; when he's all right again, we'll find out from him how he

happened to be adrift all by himself, like a bear in a washing-tub. There, go along with Phillips, boy."

"He's of the right sort," said one of the men, who had brought him on board, casting his eyes in the direction of our hero, who was descending the companion—"I thought so when I see'd him have his wits about him to hoist the signal. He made no more of jumping overboard than a Newfoundland dog—never stopped two seconds to think on't."

"We shall soon see what he is made of," replied the captain, re-lighting his pipe, which had been allowed to go out during the time that they were rescuing Willy and the men from the boat when she returned.

Willy was soon provided with more comfortable clothing; and, whether it was or was not, from a whim of Phillips's, who had been commissioned to rig him out, he appeared on deck the very picture of the animal which he had been compared to by the captain. Thick woollen

stockings, which were longer than both his legs and thighs, a pair of fisherman's well greased boots, a dark Guernsey frock, that reached below his knees, and a rough pea jacket, that descended to his heels, made him appear much broader than he was high. A red woollen night-cap completed his attire, which, although anything but elegant, was admirably calculated to assist the brandy in restoring the circulation.

"Here he is, captain, *all a-taunto*, but not very neat," said Phillips, shoving Willy up the hatchway, for he was so encumbered with the weight of his new apparel that he never could have ascended without assistance—"I have stowed away some spirits in his hold, and he no longer beats the devil's tattoo with his grinders."

"Now, my lad," said the captain, taking his pipe out of his mouth, "tell me what's your name, what you are, and how you came to be adrift in that barky? Tell me the truth—be honest, always be honest, it's the best policy."

Now, it rather unfortunately happened for Willy, that these first two questions were rather difficult for him to answer. He told his story with considerable hesitation,—*believed* his name was Seymour—*believed* he was a midshipman. He was listened to without interruption by the captain and crew of the vessel, who had gathered round to hear him “spin his yarn.” When he had finished, the captain, looking Willy very hard in the face, thus addressed him—“My little friend, excuse me, but I have had some slight knowledge of the world, and I therefore wish that you had not forgotten the little advice I gave you, as a caution, before you commenced your narrative. Did not I say, ‘*be honest?*’ You *believe* you are an officer, *believe* your name to be Seymour. I tell you, my lad, in return, that I don’t believe a word that you say; but, however, that’s of no consequence. It requires reflection to tell a lie, and I have no objection to a little invention, or a little caution with strangers. All that about the

battle was very clever—but still, depend upon it, honesty's the best policy. When we are better acquainted, I suppose we shall have the truth from you. I see the land on the lee-bow—we shall be into Cherbourg in an hour, when I expect we shall come to a better understanding."

The "Sainte Vierge," for such was the name of the vessel, which smelt most insufferably of gin, and, as our readers may probably have anticipated, was a smuggler, running between Cherbourg and the English coast, soon entered the port, and, having been boarded by the officers of the Douane, (who made a very proper distinction between smuggling from and to their own territories,) came to an anchor close to the mole. As soon as the vessel was secured, the captain went below, and in a few minutes re-appearing, dressed in much better taste than one-half of the saunterers in Bond Street, went on shore to the cabaret, where he usually took up his quarters, taking with him

our hero, whose strange attire, so peculiarly contrasted with that of the captain's, was a source of great amusement to the sailors and other people, who were assembled on the quay.

“*Ah, mon capitaine, charmé de vous revoir. Buons un coup, n'est-ce pas ?*” said the proprietor of the cabaret, presenting a bottle of prime French brandy, and a liquor glass, to the captain, as he entered.

“*Heureux voyage, n'est-ce pas, Monsieur ?*”

“*Ca va bien,*” replied the captain, throwing the glass of liquor down his throat. “My apartments, if you please, and a bed for this lad. Tell Mr. Beaujou, the slopseller, to come here directly with some clothes for him. Is Captain Debriseau here?”

“He is, Sir,—lost all his last cargo—obliged to throw over in deep water.”

“Never mind: he ran the two before—he can afford it.”

“Ah, but Captain Debriseau is in a very bad

humour, nevertheless. He called me an old cheat this morning—*c'est incroyable*."

"Well, present my compliments to him, and say that I request the honour of his company, if he is not otherwise engaged. Come, youngster."

The landlord of the cabaret ushered the captain of the sloop and our hero, with many profound bows, into a low dark room, with only one window, the light from which was intercepted by a high wall, not four feet distant. The floor was paved with tiles, the table was deal, not very clean, and the whitewashed walls were hung around with stiff drawings of several smuggling vessels, whose superior sailings and consequent good fortune had rendered them celebrated in the port of Cherbourg. The straw had been lighted under some logs of wood on the hearth, which as yet emitted more smoke than flame; a few chairs, an old battered sofa, and an upright press, completed the furniture.

“ I knew your beautiful sloop long before she came in—there’s no mistaking her ; and I ordered the apartment *de Monsieur* to be prepared. *C’est un joli appartement, n’est-ce pas, Monsieur ?* so retired !” With some forbearance, but with great judgment, the beauty of the prospect was not expatiated upon by the obsequious landlord.

“ It will do to smoke and eat in, Mons. Picardon, and that is all that I require. Now bring pipes and tobacco, and take my message to Captain Debriseau.”

The latter gentleman and the pipes were ushered in at the same moment.

“ McElvina, my dear fellow, I am glad to see that you have had better luck than I have had this last trip. Curses on the cutter. *Sacristie*,” continued Captain Debriseau, who was a native of Guernsey, “ the wind favoured her three points after we were about, or I should have doubled him—ay, and have doubled the

weight of the leathern bag too. *Sacré nom de Dieu,*" continued he, grinding his teeth, and pulling a handful of hair out of his rough head, which could have spared as much as Absalom used to poll—" *Que ça me fait bisquer.*"

"*Bah !—laissez aller, mon ami*—sit down and take a pipe," rejoined our captain. " This is but pettifogging work at the best: it won't pay for the means of resistance. My lugger will be ready in May, and then I'll see what a revenue cutter is made of. I was at Ostend last Christmas, and saw her. By Jove, she's a beauty ! She was planked above the watermark then, and must be nearly ready for launching by this time. I'll pass through the Race but once more ; then adieu to dark nights and south-west gales—and huzza for a row of teeth, with the will, as well as the power, to bite. Sixteen long nines, my boy !"

" Quick returns though, quick returns, mess-mate," answered Debriseau, referring to the Cherbourg system of smuggling, which being

his own means of livelihood, he did not like to hear disparaged.

For the benefit of those who have no objection to unite a little information with amusement, I shall here enter into a few remarks relative to the smuggling carried on between the port of Cherbourg and our own coast,—pre-mising that my readers have my entire approbation to skip over a page or two, if they are not anxious to know anything about these nefarious transactions.

The port of Cherbourg, from its central situation, is better adapted than any other in France, for carrying on this trade with the southern coast of England. The nearest port to it, and at which, therefore, the smuggling is principally carried on, is the Bill of Portland, near to the fashionable watering-place of Weymouth.

The vessels employed in this contraband trade, of which gin is the staple commodity, are generally small luggers or sloops, from

forty to sixty tons burthen. In fine summer weather, row-boats are occasionally employed; but, as the *run* is only of twenty-four hours' duration, the dark nights and south-west gales are what are chiefly depended upon.

These vessels are not armed with an intention to resist; if they are perceived by the cruisers or revenue vessels, before they arrive on the English coast, and are pursued, they are obliged (if not able to escape, from superior sailing) to throw over their cargo in "deep water," and it is lost. The cargo is thrown overboard, to avoid the penalty and imprisonment to which it would subject the crew, as well as the confiscation of the vessel and cargo. If they reach the English coast, and are chased by the revenue vessels, or have notice, by signals from their agents on shore, that they are discovered, and cannot land their cargoes, they take the exact bearings and distances of several points of land, and with heavy stones sink their tubs of spirits, which are always strung upon

a hawser like a row of beads. There the cargo is left, until they have an opportunity of going off in boats to creep for it, which is by dragging large hooks at the bottom, until they catch the hawsers, and regain possession of their tubs. Such is the precision with which their marks are taken, and their dexterity from continual practice, that they seldom fail to recover their cargo. The profits of this contraband trade are so great, that if two cargoes are lost, a third safely landed will indemnify the owners.

I must observe, much to the discredit of the parties who are concerned, that this contraband trade is not carried on by individuals, but by a company; one hundred pound shares are taken of "*a speculation*," the profits of which are divided yearly; and many individuals residing on the coast who would be thought incapable of lending themselves to such transactions, are known to be deeply interested.

The smuggling from Havre and Ostend, &c., is confined to the coast of Ireland and the northern shores of England; the cargoes are assorted and of great value: and as the voyage and risk are greater, they are generally fast sailing vessels, well manned and armed, to enable them to offer resistance, when the disparity of force is not too great on their side.

Captain M^cElvina had taken up the smuggling trade between Cherbourg and Portland, to keep himself employed until a fine lugger of sixteen guns, the command of which had been promised him, and which was intended to run between Havre and the coast of Ireland, should be ready; whereas Captain Debriseau had been all his life employed in the Cherbourg trade, and had no intention of quitting it.

“ But what have you got there, Mac?” said Debriseau, pointing with his pipe to our hero, who sat on the leathern sofa, rolled up in his uncouth attire; “ is it a bear, or a boy?”

“ A boy, that I picked up from a wreck. I am thinking what I shall do with him—he is a smart, bold lad.”

“ By Jupiter,” rejoined Debriseau, “ I’ll make him my Ganymede, till he grows older.”

Had Willy been as learned in mythology as Captain Debriseau, he might have informed him, that he had served in that capacity in his last situation under Mr. Bullock ; but although the names, as appertaining to a ship, were not unknown to him, yet the attributes of the respective parties were a part of his education that old Adams had omitted.

“ He will be fit for anything,” rejoined our captain, “ if he will only be honest.”

“ McElvina,” said Debriseau, “ you always have these words in your mouth, ‘ be honest.’ Now, as, between ourselves, I do not think that either you or I are leading very honest lives, allow me to ask you why you continually harp upon honesty when we are alone ? I can easily

understand the propriety of shamming a little before the world."

"Debriseau, had any other man said half as much, I would have started my grog in his face. It's no humbug on my part. I mean it sincerely ; and, to prove it, I will now give you a short sketch of my life ; and after you have heard it, I have no doubt but that you will acknowledge, with me, the truth of the old adage, that 'Honesty is the best policy.'"

But Captain M^cElvina must have a chapter to himself.

CHAPTER X.

He hath as fine a hand at picking a pocket as a woman, and is as nimble-fingered as a juggler. If an unlucky session does not cut the rope of his life, I pronounce he will be a great man in history.

Beggars' Opera.

“IT is an old proverb that ‘one half the world do not know *how* the other half live.’ Add to it, nor *where* they live, and it will be as true. There is a class of people, of whose existence the public are too well aware; but of whose resorts, and manners, and customs, among their own fraternity, they are quite as ignorant now, as they were one hundred years back. Like the Chinese and the castes of the east,

they never change their profession, but bequeath it from father to son, as an entailed estate from which they are to derive their subsistence. The class to which I refer consists of those members of the community at large, who gain their livelihood by inserting their hands into the pockets of other people,—not but that all the world are doing the same thing, and have, since the creation; but then it is only as *amateurs*;—the class I refer to do it *professionally*, which, you must observe, makes a wide difference. From this class I am lineally descended; and, at an early age, was duly initiated into all the mysteries of my profession. I could filch a handkerchief as soon as I was high enough to reach a pocket, and was declared to be a most promising child.

“I must do my father and mother the justice to acknowledge, that while they initiated me in the mysteries of my future profession, they did not attempt to conceal that there were certain disagreeable penalties attached to ‘great-

ness;’ but, when prepared from our earliest years, we look forward to our fate with resignation : and as I was invariably told, after my return from some daring feat, that my life would be a short and a merry one, I was not dismayed at the words of my prophetic mother, who observed, ‘ Patrick, my boy, if you don’t wish to bring my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave, promise me to confine yourself to picking-pockets ; you will then only be transported : but if you try your hand at higher work, you’ll be hung before you’re twenty.’ My father, when I returned with a full assorted cargo, and emptied my pockets into his hands, with as much rapidity as I had transferred the contents of others into my own, used to look at me with a smile of pride and satisfaction, and, shaking his head, would exclaim—‘ Pat you’ll certainly be hung.’

“ Accustomed, therefore, from my infancy, to consider twenty summers, instead of threescore years and ten, as the allotted space of my exist-

ence, I looked forward to my exit from this world, by the new drop, with the same placidity as the nobleman awaits the time appointed for the entrance of his body into the vault containing the dust of his ancestors. At the age of eleven years, I considered myself a full-grown man, dared all that man could do, and was a constant, but unwilling, attendant upon the police office, where my youth, and the promises of my mother that I should be reformed, assisted by showers of tears on her part, and by apparent ingenuousness on mine, frequently pleaded in my favour with the prosecutors.

“ I often lamented, when at that early age, that my want of education prevented me from attempting the higher walks of our profession ; but this object of my ambition was gained at last. I had taken a pocket-book from a worthy Quaker, and, unfortunately, was perceived by a man at a shop window, who came out, collared, and delivered me into the hands of the prim gentleman. Having first secured his property,

he then walked with me and a police officer to Bow Street. My innocent face, and my tears, induced the old gentleman, who was a member of the Philanthropic Society, not only not to prefer the charge against me, but to send me to the institution at Blackfriars-road.

“ I made rapid progress under their tuition, and after three years’ close application on my part, and continual inculcation, on the part of my instructors, of the distinction between *meum* and *tuum*, I was considered not only a very clever boy, but a reformed character. The Quaker gentleman, who had placed me in the institution, and who was delighted with the successful results of his own penetration, selected me as his servant, and took me home.”

“ Well, I’m glad you were so soon reformed,” said Debriseau. “ Where the devil’s my handkerchief?”

“ Oh, I’ve not got it,” answered McElvina, laughing. “ But you are as much mistaken now as the Quaker was at that time. A wild

beast may be tamed, and will remain so, provided he be not permitted again to taste blood. Then all his ferocious propensities will reappear, and prove that his education has been thrown away. So it was with me. At first, I felt no desire to return to my old employment; and had not my master trusted me too much, I might have remained honest. You often hear masters exclaiming against the dishonesty of servants. I know it to be a fact, that most of them have been made dishonest by the carelessness of their employers, in having allowed temptations to lie in their way, which were too strong to be resisted. My master used to send me up to his bureau, for small sums which he required, out of a yellow canvas bag, full of gold and silver. I am convinced that he frequently used to give me the key, when in company with his friends, in order that, after I had left the room, he might tell my history, and prove the beneficial effects of the society. One day the yellow bag and I both disappeared.

“ I threw off the modest grey coat, in which I was equipped, and soon procured more fashionable attire. I looked in the glass, and scarcely knew myself; I had, therefore, no fear of being recognised by my former master. Not wishing to be idle, I hired myself out as tiger and valet to a young nobleman, who was spending ten thousand pounds a year upon an allowance of seven hundred. He was a complete *roué*, and I must gratefully own, that I learnt a great deal from him, independently of the secret of tying my neckcloth correctly;—but we soon parted.”

“ How was that ?” said Debriseau, knocking the ashes out of his pipe.

“ Why, he had several diamond rings, and as he only wore two or three at a time, I sported the others at our parties. A malicious fellow, who was envious of the dash I cut, observed, in my hearing, that it was impossible to tell real stones from good paste. I took the hint, and, one by one, the diamonds vanished, and paste

usurped their places. Shortly after, the creditors, not being able to touch my master's money, or his person, seized his effects, and the diamond rings were almost the only articles which escaped. My master, who always looked out for a rainy day, had collected these rings as a sort of stand-by, to "raise the wind" when required. By ill luck, he took them to the same jeweller who had been employed by me to substitute the paste, and to whom I had sold the real stones. He came home in a great rage, accused me of dishonesty, and sent for a constable. I told him, that I did not consider his conduct to be that of a gentleman, and wished him good morning. I had indeed intended to quit him, as he was *done up*, and only waited his return to tell him so. I had moved my trunks, accordingly, before he was out of bed. I believe a few of his suits, and some of his linen, were put in with mine, in my extreme haste ; but then he owed me wages.

" When I wished his lordship good morning,

I certainly imagined that I had little more to learn ; but I must acknowledge that I was mistaken. I knew that there was a club established for servants out of place, and had been a subscriber for two years,—as there were many advantages arising from it, independently of economy. I was now a member by right, which, as long as I was in place, I was not. To this club I repaired, and I soon found that I, who fancied myself perfect, was but a *tyro* in the profession. It was a grand school certainly, and well organized. We had our president, vice-president, auditors of accounts, corresponding members, and our secretary. Our seal was a bunch of green poplar rods, with ‘*Service is no inheritance*’ as a motto.

“ But not to weary you with a life of adventures which would fill volumes, I shall merely state, that I was in place, out of place, following up my profession in every way, with great credit among our fraternity, until, one day, I found myself, after a tedious confinement in

Newgate, decorated with a yellow jacket, and pair of fetters, on board of a vessel of three hundred tons burthen, bound to New South Wales. We sailed for Sydney, where I had been recommended, by the gentleman in a large wig, to remain seven years for change of air. The same night that the vessel came into the cove, having more liberty than the rest of my shipmates, (from my good behaviour during the passage,) I evaded the sentry, and slipping down by the cable into the water, swam to a ship lying near, which, I had been informed, was to sail on the ensuing day for India.

“The captain being very short of hands, headed me up in a cask; and, although the vessel was not permitted to sail until very strict search had been made for me, I was not discovered, and it was supposed that I had been drowned in making the attempt. Aware that it would not be good for my health to return previously to the expiration of the seven years, I determined to learn a new *profession*—that of a

sailor, for which I always had a predilection ; besides, it quieted my conscience as to the impropriety of not submitting to the just punishment of the law, as you will acknowledge that seven years at sea, and seven years' transportation, are one and the same thing. From Batavia, I went to Calcutta, and worked before the mast in the country vessels to Bombay and the Persian Gulf, for four years, when I thought myself capable of taking higher rank in the service, if I could get it ; especially as I had picked up sufficient navigation to be able to work the ship's reckoning.

“ At Calcutta I obtained a situation as second-mate of a fast-sailing schooner, employed in the smuggling of opium into China, and, after three voyages, rose to the office of chief mate. Had I remained another voyage, I should have been captain of the vessel ; but my seven years were out, and I was anxious to return to England, and look the *Robin Red Breasts* boldly in the face. I had saved enough money to

pay my passage, and was determined to go home like a gentleman, if I had not exactly gone *out* in that character. What little cash remained after my passage was paid, I lost at play to an army officer, who was returning in the same ship.

“ When I landed at Portsmouth, I retained a suit of ‘ long togs,’ as we call them, and, disposing of all the rest of my stock to the Jews, I started for London. On my arrival I found that my father and mother were both dead, and I was meditating upon my future course of *life*, when an accident determined me. I picked up a pocket-book”—(here Captain Debriseau eyed him hard)—“ I know what you mean,” continued M^cElvina, “ but it *was* on the pavement, and not *in a pocket*, as you would imply by your looks. It was full of slips and scraps of paper of all sorts, which I did not take the trouble to read. The only available articles it contained, were three one-pound notes. The owner’s name and address were written

on the first blank leaf. I cannot tell what possessed me, but I had an irresistible desire to be honest, once in my life, and the temptation to be otherwise not being very great, I took the pocket-book to the address, and arrived at the house just as the old gentleman to whom it belonged was giving *directions* to have it advertised. He was in evident perturbation at his loss—and I came just at the fortunate moment. He seized his book with rapture, examined all the papers, and counted over the bills and notes.

“ ‘Honesty is a scarce commodity, young man,’ said he, as he passed the leathern tongue of the book through the strap. ‘You have brought me my book, without waiting till a reward was offered. I desired my clerk to offer twenty guineas in the advertisement—I will now give you a larger sum.’ He sat down, opened a checque-book, and wrote me a draft on his banker. It was for one hundred pounds! I was profuse in my acknowledgments, while

he replaced his book in his inside pocket, and buttoned up his coat. 'Honesty is a scarce commodity, young man,' repeated he; 'call here to-morrow at one o'clock, and I will see if I can be of any further service to you.'

"I returned to my lodgings in a very thoughtful mood. I was astonished at the old man's generosity, and still more at my having honestly obtained so large a sum. I went to bed, and reflected on what had passed. The words of the old gentleman still rang in my ears—'Honesty is a scarce commodity.' I communed with myself. Here have I been, nearly all my life, exercising all my talents, exerting all my energies in dishonest practices, and when did I, even at the most successful hit, obtain as much money as I have by an honest act? I recalled the many days of anxious waiting that I had found necessary to accomplish a scheme of fraud—the doubtful success—the necessity of satisfying my associates—the inability of turning into ready money the articles purloined until

the hue and cry was over—the trifling sum which I was obliged to take from the purchasers of stolen articles, who knew that I was at their mercy—the destitute condition I occasionally was in—and the life of constant anxiety that I had led. These reflections forced the truth upon my mind, that there was more, in the end, to be gained by honesty than by roguery.

“Once convinced, I determined to lead a new life, and from that moment I assumed as my motto, ‘Honesty is the best policy.’ Do you hear, youngster?—‘always be honest.’”

CHAPTER XI.

Through tattered clothes small vices do appear ;
Robes and furred gowns hide all.

LEAR.

WILLY, who was tired out with the extreme mental and bodily exertion that he had undergone, gave no answer to M^cElvina's injunction, except a loud snore, which satisfied the captain that his caution in this instance was not heard.

"Well," said Debriseau, after a short pause, "how long did this honest fit last?"

"What do you mean?—How long did it last? Why, it has lasted,—Captain Debriseau,—it has

lasted until now ; and shall last, too, as long as this frame of mine shall hold together. But to proceed. The next morning I called upon the old gentleman, according to his request. He again told me ‘honesty was a scarce commodity.’ I could have informed him that it had always been so with me, but I kept my own counsel. He then asked me, what were my profession and pursuits? Now, as I had two professions to choose between, and as my last was considered to be just as abundant in the commodity he prized so much, as my former one was known to be deficient, I replied, that I was a sea-faring man. ‘Then I may find some employment for you,’ replied the old gentleman ; and having put several questions to me as to the nature of the service I had seen, he desired me to take a walk till three o’clock, when he would be happy to see me at dinner :—‘ We’ll then be able to have a little conversation together, without being overheard.’

“ I was exact to my appointment, and my

old friend, who was punctuality itself, did not allow me to remain in the parlour two minutes before dinner was on the table. As soon as it was over, he dismissed the servant girl who attended, and turned the key in the door. After sounding me on many points, during a rapid discussion of the first bottle of port, he proceeded to inform me, that a *friend* of his wanted a smart fellow as captain of a vessel, if I would like the employment. This suited me; and he then observed, that I must have some notion of how officers were managed, as I had been in the China trade, and that he *thought* that the vessel was to be employed in the contraband trade on the English coast.

“ This startled me a little, for I was afraid that the old gentleman was laying a trap for my newly acquired commodity; and I was about to refuse with some slight show of indignation, when I perceived a change in his countenance, indicative of disappointment—so I only demurred until he had sufficient time to prove that there was

no dishonesty in the transaction, when, being convinced that he was in earnest, I consented. Before the second bottle was finished, I found out that it was not for a *friend*, but for himself, and for one of his own vessels, that he was anxious to procure a smart captain ; and that he had a large capital embarked in the concern, which was very profitable. The pocket-book, which I had returned, was of no little importance ; had it fallen into other hands, it might have told tales.

“ I have now been three years in the old gentleman's employ, and a generous good master he has been ; and his daughter is a sweet pretty girl. I lost my last vessel, but not until she had cleared him £10,000 ; and now the old gentleman is building me another at Havre. Not to be quite idle, I have in the mean time taken command of one of their sloops ; for the old gentleman has a good many shares in the *speculation*, and his recommendations are always attended to.”

“ *Voici Monsieur Beaujou, avec les habits,*” said the maître d’auberge, opening the door, and ushering in the marchand des modes *maritimes*, with a huge bundle.

“ Now, then, boy, rouse out,” said M^c Elvina, shaking our hero for a long while, without any symptoms of recovering him from his lethargy.

“ Try him on the other tack,” said the captain, lifting him off the sofa, and placing him upright on his legs.

“ There’s no sugar in it yet,” said Willy, who was dreaming that he was supplying the mulled claret to the old master’s-mate.

“ Ah,” said Debriseau, laughing, “ he thinks his mamma is giving him his tea.”

“ The lying little rascal told me this morning he had no mother. Come, Mr. William Seymour, *I believe*”—(mimicking) “ officer, *I believe*—Oh, you’re a nice honest boy. Have you a mother, or do you tell fibs in your sleep as well as awake? ‘ Be honest.’ ”

The last words, that Willy had heard repeated so often during the day, not only unsealed his eyes, but recalled to his recollection where he was.

"Now, my youngster, let us rig you out ; you recollect you stated that you were going home for your outfit, and now I'll give you one, that you may have one fib less on your conscience."

By the generosity of McElvina, Willy was soon fitted with two suits of clothes, requiring little alteration, and Mr. Beaujou, having received a further order for a supply of shirts, and other articles necessary to complete, made his bow and disappeared.

The two captains resumed their chairs, and our hero again coiled himself on the sofa, and in one minute was as sound asleep as before.

"And now, McElvina," resumed Debri-seau, "I should like to know by what arguments your employer contrived to reconcile your present vocation with your punctilious regard for honesty ? For I must confess, for my own part,

that although I have followed smuggling as a livelihood, I have never defended it as an honest calling, and have looked forward with occasional impatience to the time when I should be able to leave it off."

"Defend it ! Why I'll just repeat to you the arguments used by the old gentleman. They convinced me. As I said before, I am always open to conviction. Captain Debriseau, you will acknowledge, I trust, that laws are made for the benefit of all parties, high and low, rich and poor ?"

"Granted."

"You'll allow, also, that law-makers should not be law-breakers ; and that if they are so, they cannot expect that others will regard what they disregard themselves."

"Granted also."

"Once more—by the laws of our country, the receiver is as bad as the thief, and they who instigate others to commit an offence, are equally guilty with the offending party."

“ It cannot be denied,” replied Debriseau.

“ Then you have acceded to all the propositions that I wish, and we shall come to an undeniable and mathematical conclusion. Observe, law-makers should not be law-breakers. Who enacted these laws?—the aristocracy of the nation, seated in their respective houses, the Lords and the Commons. Go, any night you please, to the Opera, or any other place of public resort, in which you can have a view of their wives and daughters. I’ll stake my existence that every female there shall be dizen’d out in some contraband article of dress—not one but shall prove to be a receiver of smuggled goods, and, therefore, as bad as those whom they have instigated to *infringe* the laws of their country. If there were no demand, there would be no supply.”

“ Surely they don’t *all* drink gin?” replied Debriseau.

“ Drink gin ! You’re thinking of your d—d Cherbourg trade—your ideas are confined. Is

there nothing smuggled besides gin? Now, if the husbands and fathers of these ladies,—those who have themselves enacted the laws,—wink at their *infringement*, why should not others do so? The only distinction between the equally offending parties is, that those who are in power,—who possess all the comforts and luxuries which this world can afford,—who offend the laws from vanity and caprice, and entice the needy to administer to their love of display, are protected and unpunished; while the adventurous seaman, whose means of supporting his family depend upon his administering to their wishes, or the poor devil who is unfortunately detected with a gallon of spirits, is thrown into gaol as if he were a *felon*. There cannot be one law for the rich, and another for the poor, Debriseau. When I hear that the wives of the aristocracy have been seized by the revenue officers, that the contraband articles which they wear have been taken off their backs, and that they have been sentenced to

twelve months' imprisonment by a committal from the magistrate, then—and not till then—will I acknowledge our profession to be *dishonest*.”

“Very true,” said Debriseau; “it shews the folly of men attempting to make laws for their *masters*.”

“Is it not shocking,” continued M^cElvina, “to reflect upon the conduct of the magistrate, who has just sentenced perhaps four or five unhappy wretches to a dungeon for an offence against these laws? He leaves the seat of Justice, and returns to the bosom of his family. Hear his wife,” (mimicking)—“ ‘Well, my dear, you’re come at last—dinner has been put back this half hour. I thought you would never have finished with those odious smugglers.’— ‘Why, my love, it was a very difficult case to prove; but we managed it at last, and I have signed the warrant for their committal to the county gaol. They’re sad troublesome fellows, these smugglers.’—Now look at the lady: ‘What

dress is that you put on to greet your husband ?' 'Gros de Naples de Lyons.'—'The lace it is trimmed with?' 'Valenciennes.'—'Your gloves, Madam?' 'Fabrique de Paris.'—'Your ribbons, your shoes, your handkerchief?'—All, all contraband.—Worthy magistrate, if you would hold the scales of Justice with an even hand, make out *one more* mittimus before you sit down to table. Send your wife to languish a twelvemonth in company with the poor smugglers, and then 'to dinner with what appetite you may.' And now, Debriseau, have I convinced you that I may follow my present calling, and still say '*be honest ?*' "

"Why, yes, I think we both may ; but would not this evil be removed by free-trade?"

"Heaven forbid!" replied M^cElvina, laughing ; "then there would be no *smuggling*."

CHAPTER XII.

Love me, love my dog.

Proverb.

IT is the misfortune of those who have been in constant habits of deceit, that they always imagine others are attempting the same dishonest practices. For some time, M^cElvina felt convinced that our little hero had swerved from truth in the account which he gave of himself; and it was not until after repeated catechisings, in which he found that, strange and improbable as the narrative appeared, Willy never altered

from or contradicted his original statement, that he believed the boy to be as honest and ingenuous as might have been inferred from his prepossessing countenance.

To this conviction, however, did he arrive at last; and our hero—who seemed no sooner to have lost one protector, than to have the good fortune to find another—became the favourite and companion of his new captain, instead of his domestic, as had been originally contemplated. A lad of Willy's age, who is treated with kindness and consideration, is soon attached, and becomes reconciled to any change of circumstances. It was a matter of indifference to our hero, whether he was on the quarter-deck of a man-of-war, or in the cabin of a smuggling sloop. Contented with his present lot,—with the happy thoughtlessness of youth, he never permitted the future to disturb his repose, or affect his digestion.

Willy had been nearly a month at Cherbourg when M^cElvina's sloop took in another cargo.

“Willy,” said McElvina, one evening as they sat together in the apartment at the cabaret, “to-morrow I shall, in all probability, sail for the English coast. I have been thinking what I shall do with you. I do not much like parting with you ; but, on reflection, I think it will be better that I should leave you behind. You can be of no use, and may be in the way if we should be obliged to take to our boat.”

Willy pleaded hard against this arrangement. “I never have a friend but I lose him directly,” said the boy, and the tears started into his eyes.

“I trust you will not lose me, my dear fellow,” replied McElvina, moved at this proof of affection ; “but I must explain to you why I leave you. In the first place,” added he, laughing, “with that mark on your shoulder, it would be felony, without benefit of clergy, for you to be found in my possession ; but of that I would run the risk. My serious reasons are as follow :—If this trip proves fortunate, I shall

not return to Cherbourg. I have business of importance in London, which may require my presence for some weeks in that metropolis and its vicinity. I told you before, that I am about to take the command of a very different vessel from this paltry sloop, and upon a more dangerous service. In four or five months she will be ready to sail, and during that time I shall be constantly on the move, and shall hardly know what to do with you. Now, Willy, you are not aware of the advantages of education—I am : and as mine was given to me by strangers, so will I in return bestow as much upon you as I can afford. You must, therefore, go to school until my return. You will at least acquire the French language, and you will find that of no little use to you hereafter.”

Willy, accustomed to discipline and to breathe the air of passive obedience, submitted without raising any more objections, Debriseau joined, and they all three sallied forth to make arrangements for placing our hero “*en pension*,

where they had been recommended. Having effected this, they agreed to lounge on the *Place d'Armes* till sunset, when they took possession of one of the benches. McElvina and Debriseau lighted their cigars, and puffed away in silence, while Willy amused himself with watching the promenaders as they passed in review before him.

They had not remained there many minutes when a poodle-dog, *bien tondu*, and white as a sheep from the river before the day of shearing, walked up to them with an air of sagacious curiosity, and looked McElvina stedfastly in the face. McElvina, taking his cigar from his mouth, held it to the dog, who ran up to it, as if to smell it; the lighted end coming in contact with his cold nose, induced the animal to set up a loud yell, and retreat to his master much faster than he came, passing first one fore-paw and then the other over his nose, to wipe away the pain, in such a ridiculous manner as to excite loud merriment, not only from

our party on the bench, but also from others who had witnessed the scene.

“So much for curiosity,” said M^cElvina, continuing his mirth. The proprietor of the dog, a young Frenchman, dressed very much “*en calicot*,” did not, however, seem quite so much amused with this practical joke; he cocked his hat fiercely on one side, raised his figure to the utmost of its height, and walking up, *en grand militaire*, addressed M^cElvina with, “*Comment, Monsieur, vous avez fait une grande bêtise-là—vous m’insultez—*”

“I think I had better not understand French,” said M^cElvina, aside to Debriseau; then turning to the Frenchman, with a grave face, and air of incomprehension,—“What did you say, Sir?”

“Ah! you are Inglisman. You not speak French?”—M^cElvina shook his head, and began to puff away his cigar.

“Den, Sare, if you not speak de French langage, I speak de Englis, like von natif, and

I tell you, Sare, *que vous m'avez insulté*. Got for dam!—you burn my dog nose; vat you mean, Sare?”

“The dog burnt his own nose,” answered McElvina, mildly.

“Vat you mean? de dog burn his own nose! How is a dog cap-able to burn his own nose? Sare, you put de cigar to my dog nose. I must have de *satisfaction*, or de apology, *tout de suite*.”

“But, Sir, I have not insulted *you*.”

“Sare, you insult my dog—he is von and de same ting—*mon chien est un chien de sentiment*. He feel de affront all de same vid me—I feel de affront all de same vid him. *Vous n'avez qu'à choisir, Monsieur*—”

“Between you and your dog,” answered McElvina—“Well, then, I'd rather fight the dog.”

“Bah! fight de dog—de dog cannot fight, Sare: *mais je suis son maître et son ami*, and I vill fight for him.”

“Well, then, Monsieur, I did insult your dog, I must acknowledge, and I will give him the satisfaction which you require.”

“And how vill you give de satisfaction to de dog?”

“Why, Sir, you said just now, that he was *un chien de beaucoup de sentiment*;—if he is so, he will accept and properly appreciate my apology.”

“Ah, Sare,” replied the Frenchman, relaxing the stern wrinkles of his brow, “*c’est bien dit*; you will make de apology to de dog. *Sans doute*, he is de principal, I am only de second. *C’est une affaire arrangée. Moustache, viens ici, Moustache.*” (the dog came up to his master.) “*Monsieur est très-fâché de t’avoir brulé le nez.*”

“Monsieur Moustache,” said McElvina, taking off his hat, with mock gravity, to the dog, who seemed determined to keep at a respectful distance, “*je vous demande mille excuses.*”

“*Ah! que c’est charmant!*” cried some of the fair sex, who, as well as the men, had been

attracted by, and were listening to the dispute. “*Que Monsieur l'Anglois est drôle ; et voyez Moustache, comme il a l'air content—vraiment c'est un chien d'esprit. Allez, Moustache,*” said his master, who was now all smiles, “*donnez la patte à Monsieur—donnez donc. Ah, Sare, he forgive you, I am very sure—il n'a pas de malice ; but he is afraid of de cigar. De burnt shild dred de vater, as your great Shakspeare say.*”

“*C'est un chien de talent : il a beaucoup de sentiment. Je suis bien fâché de l'avoir blessé, Monsieur.*”

“*Et Monsieur parle François ?*”

“I should esteem myself fortunate, if I spoke your language as well as you do mine,” replied McElvina, in French.

This compliment, before so many bystanders, completely won the heart of the vain and cholerick Frenchman.

“Ah, Sare, you are too complaisant. I hope I shall have de pleasure to make your acquaintance. *Je m'appelle Monsieur Auguste de*

Poivre. J'ai l'honneur de vous présenter une carte d'adresse. I live on de top of my mother's,—*sur l'entresol.* My mother live on de ground—*rez de chaussée.* Madame *ma mère* will be delighted to receive a Monsieur of so much vit and adresse." So saying, away went Monsieur Auguste de Poivre, followed by Moustache, who was "*all von and de same ting.*"

"Well, we live and learn," said McElvina, laughing, as soon as the Frenchman was at a little distance; "I never thought that I should have made an apology to a dog."

"Oh, but," replied Debriseau, "you forget that he was *un chien de sentiment.*"

"You may imagine, from my behaviour, that I consider him a wiser puppy than his master, for he ran away from fire, whereas his master tried all he could to get into it. Some of our countrymen would have humoured him, and turned a comedy into a tragedy—I set a proper value on my life, and do not choose to risk it about trifles."

"There has been more than one valuable life thrown away about a dog, in my remembrance," said Debriseau. "I think you behaved in a sensible manner to get rid of the affair as you did; but you would have done better not to have burnt the dog's nose."

"Granted," replied McElvina; "the more so, as I have often remarked, that there is no object in the world, except your children or your own self, in which the *meum* is so powerful, and the *tuum* so weak. You caress your own dog, and kick a strange one; you are pleased with the clamorous barking of your own cur, and you curse the same noise from another. The feeling is as powerful, almost, as that of a mother who thinks her own ugly cub a cherub compared to others, and its squallings the music of the spheres. It is because there is no being that administers so much to the self-love of his master. He submits, with humility, to the blows inflicted in the moment of irritation, and

licks the hand that corrects. He bears no revengeful feelings, and is ready to fondle and caress you the moment that your good humour returns. He is, what man looks in vain for among his kind, a faithful friend, without contradiction, — the *very perfection of a slave*. The abject submission on his part, which would induce you to despise him, becomes a merit, when you consider his courage, his fidelity, and his gratitude. I cannot think what Mahomet was about when he pronounced his fiat against them, as *unclean*."

"Well," said Debriseau, "I agree with Mahomet that they are *not clean*, especially puppies. There's that little beast at Monsieur Picardou's: I declare—"

"Pooh," interrupted McElvina, laughing, "I don't mean it in that sense—I mean that, in a despotic country, the conduct of a dog towards his master should be held up as an example for imitation; and I think that the banner of the Moslem should have borne the

dog, instead of the crescent, as an emblem of blind fidelity and tacit submission."

"That's very true," said Debriseau; "but, nevertheless, I wish Mademoiselle's puppy were either taught manners or thrown over the quay."

"*Ce n'est pas un chien de sentiment*," replied M^cElvina, laughing.—"But it is nearly dark. *Allons au cabaret*."

They returned to the inn; and the wind, on the ensuing morning, blowing strong from a favourable quarter, Willy and Debriseau accompanied M^cElvina down to the mole, from whence he embarked on board of the sloop, which was already under weigh, and in the course of an hour was out of sight.

On the following day, Captain Debriseau accompanied Willy to the *pension*, where our hero remained nearly five months, occasionally visited by the Guernsey Captain, when he returned from his smuggling trips, and, more rarely, receiving a letter from M^cElvina, who had safely landed his cargo, and was latterly at

Havre, superintending the fitting out of his new vessel. Our hero made good progress during the few months that he remained at the *pension*, and when M^cElvina returned to take him away, not only could speak the French language with fluency, but had also made considerable progress in what Sir W. C. used to designate in his toast, as “the three R’s,”—*viz.*, “Reading, ’Riting, and ’Rithmetic.”

The lugger which had been built for M^cElvina by his employer was now ready, and, bidding farewell to Debriseau, who continued in the Cherbourg trade, our hero and his protector journeyed *en diligence* to Havre.

CHAPTER XIII.

Through the haze of the night a bright flash now appearing,
"Oh, ho!" cries Will Watch, "the Philistines bear down;
Bear a hand, my tight lads, ere we think about sheering,
One broadside pour in, should we swim, boys, or drown."

Sea Song.

"Now, Willy, what do you think of La Belle Susanne?" said M^cElvina, as they stood on the pier about a stone's throw from the vessel, which lay with her broadside towards them. Not that M^cElvina had any opinion of Willy's judgment, but, from the affectionate feeling which every sailor imbibes for his own ship, he expected gratification even in the admiration of a child. The lugger was certainly

as beautiful a model of that description of vessel as had ever been launched from a slip. At the distance of a mile, with the sea running, it was but occasionally that you could perceive her long black hull,—so low was she in the water, and so completely were her bulwarks pared down; yet her breadth of beam was very great, and her tonnage considerable, as may be inferred when it is stated that she mounted sixteen long brass nine-pounders, and was manned with one hundred and thirty men. But now that she was lying at anchor in smooth water, you had an opportunity of examining with the severest scrutiny, the beautiful run of the vessel, as she sat graceful as a diver, and appeared, like that aquatic bird, ready to plunge in a moment, and disappear under the wave cleft by her sharp forefoot, and rippling under her bows.

“When shall we sail?” inquired Willy, after bestowing more judicious encomiums upon the vessel than might have been expected.

“To-morrow night, if the wind holds to the southward. We took in our powder this morning. Where were you stationed at quarters on board the ——?”

“Nowhere. I was not on the ship’s books until a day or two before I left her.”

“Then you must be a powder-monkey with me; you can hand powder up, if you can do nothing else.”

“I can do more,” replied Willy, proudly; “I can roll shells overboard.”

“Ay, ay, so you can; I forgot that. I suppose I must put you on the quarter-deck, and make an officer of you, as Captain M—— intended to do.”

“I mean to stand by you when we fight,” said Willy, taking McElvina’s hand.

“Thank you—that may not be so lucky. I’m rather superstitious; and, if I recollect right, your old friend Adams had that honour when he was killed.”

The name of old Adams being mentioned

made Willy silent and unhappy. M^cElvina perceived it ; the conversation was dropped ; and they returned home.

A few days afterwards, La Belle Susanne sailed, amidst the shouts and *vivas* of the multitude collected on the pier, and a thousand wishes for "*succès*," and "*bon voyage*"—the builder clapping his hands, and skipping with all the simial ecstasy of a Frenchman, at the encomiums lavished upon his vessel, as she cleaved through the water with the undeviating rapidity of a Barra Couta. But the *vivas*, and the shouts, and the builder, and the pier that he capered on, were soon out of sight ; and our hero was once more confiding in the trackless and treacherous ocean.

" Well, she *does* walk," said Phillips, who had followed the fortunes of his captain, and was now looking over the quarter of the vessel. " She must be a clipper as catches us with the tacks on board ! Right in the wind's eye too ; clean full. By the powers, I believe if you

were to lift her, she would lay a point on the other side of the wind."

"Get another pull of the fore-haulyards, my lads," cried McElvina. "These new ropes stretch most confoundedly. There, belay all that; take a *severe* turn, and don't come up an inch."

The breeze freshened, and the lugger flew through the water, dashing the white spray from her bows into the air, where it formed little rainbows, as it was pierced by the beams of the setting sun.

"We shall have a fine night, and light weather towards the morning, I think," said the first-mate, addressing McElvina.

"I think so too. Turn the hands up to muster by the quarter-bill. We'll load the guns as soon as the lights are out; let the gunner fill forty rounds, and desire the carpenter to nail up the hatchway-screens. Let them be rolled up and stopped. We'll keep them up for a *full due*, till we return to Havre."

The crew of the lugger were now summoned on deck by the call of the boatswain, and having been addressed by Captain M^cElvina upon the absolute necessity of activity and preparation, in a service of such peculiar risk, they loaded the guns, and secured them for the night.

The crew consisted of about eighty or ninety Englishmen, out of the full complement of one hundred and thirty men; the remainder was composed of Frenchmen, and other continental adventurers. Although the respective countries were at variance, the subjects of each had shaken hands, that they might assist each other in violating the laws. The quiet and subordination of a king's ship were not to be expected here:—loud and obstreperous mirth, occasional quarrelling, as one party, by accident or intention, wounded the national pride of the other; French, English, and Irish, spoken alternately, or at the same moment—created a degree of confusion, which proved that the reins of

government were held lightly by the captain in matters of small importance; but, although there was a general freedom of manner, and independence of address, still his authority was acknowledged, and his orders implicitly obeyed. It was a ship's company which *pulled every-way*, as the saying is, when there was nothing to demand union; but, let difficulty or danger appear, and all their squabbling was forgotten, or reserved for a more seasonable opportunity: then they all *pulled together*, those of each nation vying in taking the lead and setting an example to the other.

Such was the crew of the lugger which McElvina commanded, all of whom were picked men, remarkable for their strength and activity.

As the first-mate had predicted, the wind fell light after midnight, and at dawn of day the lugger was gliding through the smooth water, at the rate of three or four miles an hour, shrouded in a thick fog. The sun rose, and

had gained about twenty degrees of altitude when M^cElvina beat to quarters, that he might accustom his men to the exercise of the guns. The rays of the sun had not power to pierce through the fog; and, shorn of his beams, he had more the appearance of an overgrown moon, or was, as Phillips quaintly observed, "like a man disguised in woman's attire."

The exercise of the guns had not long continued, when the breeze freshened up, and the fog began partially to disperse. Willy, who was perched on the round-house abaft, observed a dark mass, looming through the mist on the weather beam. "Is that a vessel?" said Willy, pointing it out to the first-mate, who was standing near M^cElvina.

"Indeed it is, my boy," replied the mate; "you've a sharp eye of your own."

M^cElvina's glass was already on the object. "A cutter, right before the wind, coming down to us; a government vessel, of some sort or another, I'll swear. I trust she's a revenue cruiser—I

have an account to settle with those gentlemen. Stay at your quarters, my lads—hand up shot, and open the magazine !”

The powerful rays of the sun, assisted by the increasing wind, now rolled away the fog from around the vessels, which had a perfect view of each other. They were distant about two miles, and the blue water was strongly rippled by the breeze which had sprung up. The lugger continued her course on a wind, while the cutter bore down towards her, with all the sail that she could throw out. The fog continued to clear away, until there was an open space of about three or four miles in diameter. But it still remained folded up in deep masses, forming a wall on every side, which obscured the horizon from their sight. It appeared as if nature had gratuitously cleared away a sufficient portion of the mist, and had thus arranged a little amphitheatre for the approaching combat between the two vessels.

“His colours are up, Sir. Revenue stripes, by the Lord!” cried Phillips.

“Then all’s right,” replied M^cElvina.

The cutter had now run down within half a mile of the lugger, who had continued her course with the most perfect nonchalance—when she rounded to. The commander of the vessel, aware, at the first discovery of the lugger, that she could be no other than an enemy, who would most probably give him some trouble, had made every preparation for the engagement.

“Shall we hoist any colours, Sir?” said the first-mate to M^cElvina.

“No—if we hoist English, he will not commence action until he has made the private signal, and all manner of parleying, which is quite unnecessary. He knows what we are, well enough.”

“Shall we hoist a French ensign, Sir?”

“No; I’ll fight under no other colours than

those of old England, even when I resist her authority.”

A long column of white smoke now rolled along the surface of the water, as the cutter, who had waited in vain for the colours being hoisted, fired the first gun at her antagonist. The shot whizzed between the masts of the lugger, and plunged into the water a quarter of a mile to leeward.

“*A vous, Monsieur !*” roared out a French quarter-master on board of the lugger, in imitation of the compliments which take place previously to an *assaut d’armes*, at the same time taking off his hat, and bowing to the cutter.

“Too high, too high, good Mr. Searcher,” said M^cElvina, laughing ; “depress your guns to her water-line, my lads, and do not fire until I order you.”

The remainder of the cutter’s broadside was now discharged at the lugger, but the elevation being too great, the shot whizzed over, without

any injury to her crew; the main-haulyards were, however, shot away, and the yard and sail fell thundering down on the deck.

“Be smart, my lads, and bend on again; it’s quite long enough. Up with the sail, and we’ll return the compliment.”

In less than a minute, the tie of the haulyards, which had been divided close to the yard, was hitched round it, and the sail again expanded to the breeze. “Now, my lads, remember, don’t throw a shot away—fire when you’re ready.”

The broadside of the lugger was poured into the cutter, with what effect upon the crew could not be ascertained; but the main-boom was cut in half, and the outer part of it fell over the cutter’s quarter, and was dragged astern by the clew of the sail.

“It’s all over with her already,” said the first-mate to M^cElvina; and, as the cutter paid off before the wind, another broadside from her well manned antagonist raked her fore and aft.

The cutter hauled down her jib, eased off her fore-sheet, and succeeded in again bringing her broadside to bear. The action was now maintained with spirit, but much to the disadvantage of the cutter, who was not only inferior in force, but completely disabled, from the loss of her main-boom.

After an exchange of a dozen broadsides, McElvina shot the lugger ahead, and, tacking under his adversary's bows, raked him a second time. The commander of the revenue vessel, to avoid a repetition of a similar disaster, payed his vessel off before the wind, and returned the fire as they came abreast of each other; but in these manœuvres, the lugger obtained the weather gage. It was, however, a point of little consequence as matters then stood. In a few more broadsides the cutter was a complete wreck, and unable to return the fire of her opponent. Her fore-stay and haultards had been cut away, her fore-sail was down on

deck, and her jib lying overboard, under her bows.

“ I think that will do,” said M^cElvina, to the first-mate. “ We had better be off now, for our guns will be sure to bring down some of the cruisers ; and, if she surrendered, I could not take possession of her. Let’s give her a parting broadside, and three cheers.”

M^cElvina’s orders were obeyed ; but not one gun was returned by the cutter—“ Starboard a little ; keep her away now, and we’ll close and stand ahead of her, that she may read our name on the stern. It’s a pity they should not know to whom they are indebted. They’ll not forget *La Belle Susanne*.”

The cutter had not been left a mile astern before the breeze freshened, and the fog began rapidly to disperse ; and Phillips, who continued at the conn, perceived, through the haze, a large vessel bearing down towards them.

“ High time that we were off, indeed, captain :

for there's a cruiser, if I mistake not. A gun here is the same to the cruiser, as a splash in the water is to the ground sharks at Antigua;—up they all come, to see what's to be had. We shall have a dozen of them above the horizon before two hours are over our heads.”

McElvina, who had his glass fixed upon the vessel, soon made her out to be a frigate, coming down under a press of sail, attracted, as Phillips had remarked, by the reports of the guns. What made the affair more serious was, that she was evidently bringing down a strong breeze, which the lugger, although steering large, had not yet obtained. Moreover, the fog had dispersed in all directions, and the frigate neared them fast.

“B——t the cutter!” said the first-mate; “we shall pay dearly for our ‘lark.’”

“This is confoundedly unlucky,” replied McElvina; “she brings the wind down with her, and won’t part with a breath of it. However, ‘faint heart never won fair lady.’ Keep

her away two points more. Clap every thing on her. We'll *weather* her yet."

The breeze that ran along the water in advance of the frigate, now began to be felt by the lugger, who again dashed the foaming water from her bows, as she darted through the wave: but it was a point of sailing at which a frigate has always an advantage over a small vessel; and M^cElvina having gradually edged away so as to bring the three masts of his pursuer apparently into one, perceived that the frigate was rapidly closing with him.

The crew of the lugger, who had been all merriment at the successful termination of the late combat, (for not one man had been killed or severely wounded,) now paced the deck, or looked over the bulwark with serious and foreboding aspects; the foreigners particularly began to curse their fate, and considered their voyage and anticipated profits at an end. M^cElvina, perceiving their discontent, ordered the men aft, and addressed them :—

“ My lads, I have often been in a worse scrape, and have weathered it ; nor do I know but what we may yet manage to get out of this, if you will pay strict attention to my orders, and behave in that cool and brave manner which I have reason to expect from you. Much, if not all, depends upon whether the captain of that frigate is a ‘ *new hand*’ or not :—if he is an old Channel groper, we shall have some difficulty ; but, however, we will try for it, and if we do not succeed, at least we shall have the satisfaction of knowing that we did our best both for ourselves and our employers.”

McElvina then proceeded to explain to his crew the manœuvre that he intended to practise, to obtain the weather gage of the frigate, upon which their only chance of escape would depend, and the men returned to their stations, if not contented, at least with increased confidence in their captain, and strong hopes of success.

As the day closed, the frigate was within a mile of the lugger, and coming up with him

hand over hand. The breeze was strong, and the water was no longer in ripples, but curled over in short waves to the influence of the blast. The frigate yawed a little—the smoke from her bow-chaser was followed by an instantaneous report, and the shot dashed into the water close under the stern of the lugger. “Sit down under the bulwarks; sit down, my lads, and keep all fast,” said M^cElvina. “He’ll soon be tired of that; he has lost more than a cable’s length already.” M^cElvina was correct in his supposition; the commander of the frigate perceived that he had lost too much ground by deviating from his course, and the evening was closing in. He fired no more. Both vessels continued their course,—the smuggler particularly attentive in keeping the three masts of her pursuer in one, to prevent her from firing into her, or to oblige her to drop astern if she did.

Half an hour more, and as the sun’s lower limb touched the horizon, the frigate was within musket shot of the lugger, and the marines,

who had been ordered forward, commenced a heavy fire upon her, to induce her to lower her sails and surrender ;—but in vain ; by the directions of their captain, the men sheltered themselves under the bulwarks, and the vessel continued her course, with all her sails expanded to the breeze.

A few minutes more and she was right under the bows of the frigate, who now prepared to round to, and pour a broadside into her for her temerity. M^cElvina watched their motions attentively, and as the frigate yawed to with all her sails set, he gave the order to lower away ; and the sails of the lugger were in an instant down on the deck, in token of submission.

“ Helm hard a-lee, now—keep a little bit of the mizen up, Phillips—they won’t observe it.”

“ Marines, cease firing,—hands, shorten sail, and clear away the first cutter,” were the orders given on board the frigate, and distinctly heard by the smugglers ; but the heavy press of sail that the frigate was obliged to carry to come up

with the chase, was not so soon to be reduced as that of a small vessel—and, as she rounded to with studding-sails below and aloft, she shot past the lugger, and left her on her quarter.

“Now’s your time, my men. Hoist away the jib-sheet to windward.”—The lugger paid off as the wind caught the sail.—“All’s right. Up with the lugs.”

The order was obeyed as an order generally is by men working for their escape from what they most dreaded, poverty and imprisonment; and, before the frigate could reduce her sails, which were more than she could carry on a wind, the lugger had shot away on her weather quarter, and was a quarter of a mile in advance. The frigate tacked after her, firing gun after gun, but without success. Fortune favoured M^cElvina; and the shades of night soon hid the lugger from the sight of her irritated and disappointed pursuers. A longer career was before *La Belle Susanne*: she was not to be taken that time.

CHAPTER XIV.

A fisherman he had been in his youth ;
 But other speculations were, in sooth,
 Added to his connexion with the sea,
 Perhaps not so respectable, in truth,

* * * * *

He had an only Daughter.

Don Juan.

Not possessing a prompter's whistle, we must use, as a substitute, the boatswain's call, and, at his shrill pipe, we change the scene to a back parlour in one of the most confined streets at the east end of England's proud and wealthy metropolis. The *dramatis personæ* are an elderly and corpulent personage, with as little of fashion in his appearance as in his residence ; and a young female of about twenty

years of age, with expressive and beautiful features, but wanting "the damask on the cheek," the true value of which the fair sex so well appreciate, that, if not indebted for it to nature, they are too apt to resort to art for an unworthy imitation.

The first mentioned of these two personages was busy examining, through his spectacles, some papers which lay on the table before him, —occasionally diverted from his task by the pertinacity of some flies, which seemed to have taken a particular fancy to his bald forehead and scalp, which, in spite of his constant brushing off, they thought proper to consider as a pleasant and smooth sort of coursing-plain, placed there (probably in their ideas) solely for their amusement. Part of a decanter of wine, and the remains of a dessert, crowded the small table at which he sat, and added to the general air of confinement which pervaded the whole.

"It's very hot, my dear. Open the window, and let us have a little air."

"Oh, father," replied the young woman, who rose to throw up the sash, "you don't know how I pine for fresh air. How long do you intend to continue this life of constant toil and privation?"

"How long, my dear? Why, I presume you do not wish to starve—you would not be very well pleased if, when you applied for money, as you do every week *at least*, I were to tell you that the bag was empty."

"Oh, nonsense, I know better, father—don't think so poorly of me as to attempt to deceive me in that way."

"And pray, Miss Susan, what do you know?" said the old gentleman, looking up at her through his spectacles, as she stood by the side of his chair.

"I know what you have taught me, Sir. Do you recollect explaining to me the nature of the funds,—what was the meaning of the national debt,—all the varieties of stock, and what interest they all bore?"

“ Well, and what then ? ”

“ Why, then, father, I have often seen the amount of the dividends which you have received every half year, and have heard your orders to Wilmott, to re-invest in the funds. Now your last half-year's dividend in the three per cents was—let me see,—oh, £841 14s. 6d., which, you know, doubled, makes itself an income of — ”

“ And pray, Miss Susan, what business have you with all this ? ” retorted her father, half pleased, half angry.

“ Why, father, you taught me yourself, and thought me very stupid because I did not comprehend it as soon as you expected,” answered Susan, leaning over and kissing him ; “ and now you ask me what business I have to know it.”

“ Well, well, girl, it's very true,” said the old man, smiling ; “ but allowing that you are correct, what then ? ”

“ Why then, father, don't be angry if I say that it appears to me that you have more money

now than you can spend while you live, or know to whom to leave when you die. What, then, is the use of confining yourself in a dirty narrow street, and toiling all day for no earthly advantage?"

"But how do you know that I have nobody to leave my money to, Susan?"

"Have you not repeatedly said that you have no relations or kin, that you are aware of, except me; that you were once a sailor before the mast—an orphan, bound apprentice by the parish? Whom, then, have you except *me*?—and if you continue here much longer, father, I feel convinced that you will not have *me*—you will have no one. If you knew how tired I am of looking out at this horrid brick wall,—how I long for the country, to be running among the violets and primroses,—how I pine for relief from this little dungeon. Oh! what would I give to be flying before the breeze in the lugger with M^cElvina."

"Indeed, Miss!" replied old Hornblow, whom

the reader may recognise as the patron of our smuggling captain.

“Well, father, there is no harm in saying so. I want freedom. I feel as if I could not be too free—I should like to be blown about in a balloon. Oh, why don’t you give up business, go down to the sea-side, take a pretty little cottage, and make yourself and me happy I fancy the sea-breeze is blowing in my face, and all my ringlets out of curl. I shall die if I stay here much longer—I shall, indeed, father.”

Repeated attacks of this nature had already sapped the foundation; and a lovely and only daughter had the influence over her father’s heart, to which she was entitled.

“Well, well, Susan—let M^cElvina wind up the accounts of this vessel, and then I will do as you wish; but I cannot turn him adrift, you know.”

“Turn Captain M^cElvina adrift! No—if you did, father—”

“ I presume that you would be very much inclined to take him in tow—Eh, miss ?”

“ I shall never act without attending to your advice, and consulting your wishes, my dear father,” answered Susan, the suffusion of her unusually pale cheeks proving that she required but colour to be perfectly beautiful.

And here the conversation dropped. Old Hornblow had long perceived the growing attachment between his daughter and M^cElvina; and the faithful and valuable services of the latter, added to the high opinion which the old man had of his honesty, which—to do M^cElvina justice—had been most scrupulous—had determined him to let things take their own course. Indeed there was no one with whom old Hornblow was acquainted, to whom he would have intrusted his daughter's happiness with so much confidence as to our reformed captain.

A sharp double tap at the street door announced the post, and in a few minutes after this conversation, the clerk appeared with a letter

for old Hornblow, who, pursuant to the prudent custom of those days, had his counting-house on the ground-floor of his own residence, which enabled him to go to his dinner, and return to his business in the evening. Now-a-days we are all above our business, and live above our means (which is in itself sufficient to account for the general distress that is complained of), and the counting-house is deserted before dusk, that we may arrive at our residences in Russel Square, or the Regent's Park, in time to dress for a turtle dinner at six o'clock, instead of a mutton chop, or single joint, *en famille*, at two.

But to return. Old Hornblow put on his spectacles, (which were on the table since they had been removed from his nose by Susan, when she kissed him,) and examined the post mark, seal, and superscription, as if he wished to tax his ingenuity with a guess previously to opening the letter, which would have saved him all that

trouble, and have decided the point of scrutiny, viz. from whom it came?

“ M^cElvina, I rather think,” said he, musing ; “ but the post-mark is Plymouth. How the deuce!—” The two first lines of the letter were read, and the old man’s countenance fell. Susan, who had been all alive at the mention of M^cElvina’s name, perceived the alteration in her father’s looks.

“ No bad news, I hope, my dear father?”

“ Bad enough,” replied the old man, with a deep sigh ; “ the lugger is taken by a frigate, and sent into Plymouth.”

“ And Captain M^cElvina—he’s not hurt, I hope?”

“ No, I presume not, as he has written the letter, and says nothing about it.”

Satisfied upon this point, Susan, who recollected her father’s promise, was undutiful enough, we are sorry to say, to allow her heart to bound with joy at the circumstance. All her fond hopes were about to be realized,

and she could hardly refrain from carolling the words of Ariel, "Where the bee sucks, there lurk I;" but fortunately she remembered that other parties might not exactly participate in her delight. Out of respect for her father's feelings, she therefore put on a grave countenance, in sad contrast with her eyes, which joy had brilliantly lighted up.

"Well, it's a bad business," continued old Hornblow. "Wilmott!" (The clerk heard his master's voice, and came in.) "Bring me the ledger. Let me see—Belle Susanne—I wonder why the fool called her by that name, as if I had not one already to take money out of my pocket. Oh! here it is—folio 59 continued, folio 100, 129, 147,—not balanced since April last year. Be quick, and strike me out a rough balance-sheet of the lugger."

"But what does Captain M^cElvina say, father?"

"What does he say? Why, that he is taken.

Haven't I told you so already, girl," replied old Hornblow, in evident ill humour.

"Yes, but the particulars, my dear father?"

"Oh, there's only the fact, without particulars—says he will write more fully in a day or two."

"I'll answer for him, that it was not his fault, father—he has always done you justice."

"I did not say that he had not; I'm only afraid that success has made him careless—it's always the case."

"Yes," replied Susan, taking up the right clue; "as you say, father, he has been very successful."

"He has," replied the old man, recovering his serenity a little, "very successful indeed. I dare say it was not his fault."

The clerk soon made his appearance with the rough balance-sheet required. It did more to restore the good humour of the old man, than even the soothing of his daughter.

"Oh! here we are—La Belle Susanne—

Dr. to——. Total, £14,864 14s. 3d. Contra—
Cr. 27,986 16s. 8d. Balance to profit and loss,
£13,122 2s. 5d. Well, that's not so very bad
in less than three years. I think I may afford
to lose her."

"Why, father," replied Susan, leaning over
his shoulder, and looking archly at him, "'tis
a fortune in itself, to a contented person."

But as, independently of M^cElvina's letter not
being sufficiently explicit, there are other cir-
cumstances connected with his capture that are
important to our history, we shall ourselves
narrate the particulars.

For more than two years, M^cElvina, by his
dexterity and courage, and the fast sailing of
his vessel, had escaped all his pursuers, and
regularly landed his cargoes. During this time,
Willy had made rapid progress under his
instruction, not only in his general education,
but also in that of his profession. One morning
the lugger was off Cape Clear, on the coast of
Ireland, when she discovered a frigate to wind-
ward,—the wind, weather, and relative situa-

tions of the two vessels being much the same as on the former occasion, when M^cElvina, by his daring and judicious manœuvre, had effected his escape. The frigate chased, and soon closed to within a quarter-of-a-mile of the lugger, when she rounded-to, and poured in a broad-side of grape, which brought her fore-yard down on deck. From that moment such an incessant fire of musquetry was poured in from the frigate, that every man on board of M^cElvina's vessel, who endeavoured to repair the mischief, was immediately struck down. Any attempt at escape was now hopeless. When within two cables' lengths, the frigate hove to the wind, keeping the lugger under her lee, and continued a fire of grape and musquetry into her, until the rest of her sails were lowered down.

The crew of the smuggler, perceiving all chance in their favour to be over, ran down below to avoid the fire, and secure their own effects. The boats of the frigate were soon on

board of the lugger, and despatched back to her with M^cElvina and the chief officers. Willy jumped into the boat, and was taken on board with his patron.

The captain of the frigate was on the quarter-deck ; and as he turned round, it occurred to Willy, that he had seen his face before, but when or where, he could not exactly call to mind : and he continued to scrutinize him, as he paced up and down the quarter-deck, revolving in his mind where it was that he had encountered that peculiar countenance.

His eye, so fixed upon the captain that it followed him up and down as he moved, at last was met by that of the latter, who, surprised at finding so small a lad among the prisoners, walked over to the lee-side of the quarter-deck, and addressed him with—"You're but a young smuggler, my lad ; are you the captain's son?"

The voice immediately recalled to Willy's recollection every circumstance attending their last meeting, and who the captain was. He answered in the negative, with a smile.

“ You’ve a light heart, youngster. Pray, what’s your name ?”

“ *You* said that my name was to be Seymour, Sir,” replied Willy, touching his hat.

“ Said his name was to be Seymour ! What does the boy mean ?—Good Heavens ! I recollect,” observed Captain M——, for it was he. “ Are you the boy that I sent home in the *chasse marée*, to be fitted out for the quarter-deck ?”

“ Yes, Sir.”

“ And how long have you been on this praiseworthy service ?”

“ Ever since, Sir,” replied our hero, who had little idea of its impropriety.

La Belle Susanne was as renowned for her fast sailing, and repeated escapes from the cruisers, as Captain McElvina and his crew were for their courage and success. The capture of the vessel had long been a desideratum of the English government ; and Captain M——, although

gratified at her falling into his hands, was not very well pleased to find that a lad, whom he had intended to bring forward in the service, should, as he supposed, have voluntarily joined a party, who had so long bid defiance to the laws and naval force of the country. His countenance assumed an air of displeasure, and he was about to turn away, without any further remarks, when McElvina, who perceived how matters stood, and felt aware that Willy's future prospects were at stake, stepped forward, and respectfully addressing the captain, narrated, in few words, the rescue of Willy from the wreck, and added, that the boy had been detained by him, and had had no opportunity of leaving the vessel, which had never anchored but in the French port of Havre. He also stated, what was indeed true, that he had always evaded explaining to the boy the real nature of the service upon which the lugger was employed; from which it may be inferred that notwithstanding McElvina's defence of smug-

gling in our former chapters, he was not quite so well convinced, in his own mind, of its propriety as he would have induced Debriseau to suppose.

The assertions of M^cElvina turned the scale again in Willy's favour; and, after he had answered the interrogatories of the captain, relative to the fate of Mr. Bullock, and the rest of the men in the prize, Captain M——, who, although severe, was not only just, but kind-hearted, determined that his former good intentions relative to our hero should still remain in force.

“Well, Mr. Seymour, you have seen a little service, and your captain gives you a high character, as an active and clever lad. As you have been detained against your will, I think we may recover your time and pay. I trust, however, that you will, in future, be employed in a more honourable manner. We shall, in all probability, be soon in port, and till then you must

remain as you are, for I cannot trust you again in a prize."

As our hero was in a new ship, the officers and ship's company of which were not acquainted with his history, except that he had been promoted, for an act of gallantry, by Captain M——, he was favourably received by his mess-mates. The crew of the lugger were detained as prisoners on board of the frigate, and the vessel, in charge of one of the officers, was ordered to keep company, Captain M—— having determined to return into port, and not wishing to lose sight of his valuable prize.

"You have a very fine ship's company, Captain M^cElvina," observed Captain M——. "How many of them are English?"

"About eighty; and as good seamen as ever walked a plank."

Captain M—— ordered the crew of the lugger aft on the quarter-deck, and put the question to them whether they would not prefer entering

into his Majesty's service to the confinement of a prison ; but, at the moment, they felt too indignant at having been captured by the frigate to listen to the proposal, and refused to a man. Captain M—— turned away disappointed, surveying the fine body of men with a covetous eye, as they were ranged in a line on his quarter-deck. He felt what a prize they would be to him, if he could have added them to his own ship's company ; for, at that time, it was almost impossible to man the number of ships which were employed, in an effective manner.

“ Will you allow me to try what I can do for you, Sir ? ” said M^cElvina, as the men disappeared from the quarter-deck, to their former station, as prisoners. Having received the nod of assent, on the part of Captain M——, M^cElvina went down to the men, who gathered round him. He forcibly pointed out to them the advantages of the proposal, and the good chance they had of enriching themselves, by the

prize-money they would make in a frigate which could capture such a fast-sailing vessel as the lugger. He also dwelt upon the misery of the prison which awaited them: but what decided them was the observation that, in all probability, they would not be permitted (now that seamen were in such request) to remain in prison, but would be drafted into several ships, and be separated; whereas, by now entering for Captain M——, they would all remain shipmates as before.

Having obtained their unanimous consent, M^cElvina, with a pleased countenance, came aft, followed by his men, and informed Captain M—— that they had agreed to enter for his ship. “Allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your good fortune, as you will yourself acknowledge it to be, when you find out what an addition they will be to your ship’s company.”

“I am indebted to you for your interference, Sir,” replied Captain M——, “and shall not prove ungrateful. Your conduct in this

affair makes me inclined to ask another favour. I believe you can give me some valuable information, if you choose. Whether you are inclined to do so, I am not yet sure ; but I now think that you will."

" You will find me an Englishman, body and soul, Sir ; and although I have, in defence of my profession, been occasionally necessitated to choose between capture and resistance, I can most conscientiously say, that every shot I have fired against my own countrymen has smitten me to the heart ;" (and this assertion was true although we have no time to analyse M^cElvina's feelings at present). " I am not bound by honour, nor have I the least inclination, to conceal any information I may have obtained, when in the French ports. I went there to serve my purposes, and they allowed me to do so, to serve their own. I never would (although repeatedly offered bribes) bring them any information relative to the proceedings of our own country and I shall most cheerfully answer your ques-

tions ; indeed, I have information which I would have given you before now, had I not felt that it might be supposed I was actuated more by a view of serving myself than my country. I only wish, Captain M——, that you may fall in with a French frigate before I leave your ship, that I may prove to you that I can fight as well for old England as I have done in defence of property entrusted to my charge.”

“ Then do me the favour to step down into the cabin,” said Captain M——.

Captain M—— and M^cElvina were shut up in the after-cabin for some time ; and the information received by Captain M—— was so important, that he determined not to anchor. He put all the French prisoners on board of the lugger at the entrance of the Sound, and, sending in a boat to take out the major part of the men who had charge of her, he retained M^cElvina on board of the frigate, and made all sail for the French coast.

CHAPTER XV.

That which should accompany old age,
As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends,
I must not look to have !

SHAKSPEARE.

BUT we must return on shore, that we may not lose sight of the grandfather of our hero, who had no idea that there was a being in existence who was so nearly connected with him.

The time had come when that information was to be given ; for, about six weeks previously to the action we have described, in which Adams the quarter-master was killed, Admiral

De Courcy was attacked by a painful and mortal disease. As long as he was able to move about, his irritability of temper, increased by suffering, rendered him more insupportable than ever; but he was soon confined to his room, and the progress of the disease became so rapid, that the medical attendants considered it their duty to apprise him that all hopes of recovery must now be abandoned, and that he must prepare himself for the worst.

The admiral received the intelligence with apparent composure, and bowed his head to the physicians as they quitted his room. He was alone, and left to his own reflections, which were not of the most enviable nature. He was seated, propped up in an easy chair, opposite the large French window, which commanded a view of the park. The sun was setting, and the long extended shadows of the magnificent trees which adorned his extensive domain were in beautiful contrast with the gleams of

radiant light, darting in long streaks between them on the luxuriant herbage. The cattle, quietly standing in the lake, were refreshing themselves after the heat of the day, and the deer lay in groups under the shade, or crouched in their lairs, partly concealed by the underwood and fern. All was in repose and beauty, and the dying man watched the sun, as it fast descended to the horizon, as emblematical of his race, so shortly to be sped. He surveyed the groups before him—he envied even the beasts of the field, and the reclaimed tenants of the forest, for they at least had of their kind, with whom they could associate; but he, their lord and master, was alone—alone, in the world, without one who loved or cared for him, without one to sympathise in his sufferings and administer to his wants, except from interested motives—without one to soothe his anguish, and soften the pillow of affliction and disease—without one to close his eyes, or shed a tear, now that he was dying.

His thoughts naturally reverted to his wife and children. He knew that two of these individuals, out of three, were in the cold grave—and where was the other? The certain approach of death had already humanized and softened his flinty heart. The veil, that had been drawn by passion between his conscience and his guilt, was torn away. The past rushed upon his memory with dreadful rapidity and truth, and horrible conviction flashed upon his soul, as he unwillingly acknowledged himself to be the murderer of his wife and child. Remorse, as usual, followed, treading upon the heels of conviction—such remorse that, in a short space, the agony became insupportable.

After an ineffectual struggle of pride, he seized the line which was attached to the bell-rope, and, when his summons was obeyed, desired that the vicar might be immediately requested to come to him.

Acquainted with the admiral's situation, the vicar had anxiously waited the summons which

he was but too well aware would come, for he knew the human heart and the cry for aid which the sinner in his fear sends forth. He was soon in the presence of the admiral, for the first time since the day that he quitted the house with the letter of the unfortunate Peters in his possession. The conversation which ensued, between the agitated man, who had existed only for this world, and the placid teacher, who had considered it (as he inculcated) as only a preparation for a better, was too long to be here inserted. It will be sufficient to say, that the humbled and terrified wretch, the sufferer from disease, and greater sufferer from remorse, never could have been identified with the once proud and overbearing mortal, who had so long spurned at the precepts of religion, and turned a deaf ear to the mild persuasions of its apostle.

“But that letter!” continued the admiral, in a faltering voice—“what was it? I have yet one child alive—Oh, send immediately for him, and let me implore his forgiveness for my cruelty.”

“That letter, Sir, was written but one hour previously to his death.”

“His death!” cried the admiral, turning his eyes up to the ceiling. “God have mercy on me! then I have murdered him also. And how did he die? Did he starve, as I expressed in my horrid—horrid wish?”

“No, Sir: his life was forfeited to the offended laws of his country.”

“Good God, Sir!” hastily replied the admiral, whose ruling passion, pride, returned for the moment; “you do not mean to say that he was hanged?”

“Even so; but here is the letter which he wrote—read it.”

The admiral seized the letter in his tremulous hand, and devoured every word as he perused it. He let it fall on his knees, and said, in a subdued voice—“My God—my God!—and he asked forgiveness, and forgives me!” Then, with frantic exclamation, he continued, “Wretch that I am,—would that I had died for thee, my

son—my son !” and clasping his hands over his head, he fell back in a state of insensibility.

The vicar, much affected with the scene, rang the bell for assistance, which was obtained ; but the wretched man had received a shock which hastened his dissolution. He was too much exhausted to sit upright, and they were obliged to carry him to the bed, from which he never rose again. As soon as he was sufficiently recovered to be able to converse, he waved the servants from the room, and resumed, in a faltering voice—

“ But, Sir, he mentions his child—*my grand-child*. Where is he ? Can I see him ?”

“ I am afraid not, Sir,” replied the vicar, who then entered into a recital of the arrangements which had taken place, and the name of the ship on board of which our hero had been permitted to remain, under the charge of Adams, the quarter-master.

The admiral listened to the recital of the vicar without interruption ; and, as soon as it

was finished, to the great joy of the worthy pastor, expressed the most anxious wish to make every reparation in his power. Aware that difficulties might arise from the circumstance of our hero's existence not being suspected by his collateral heirs, who had for some time considered as certain their ultimate possession of his large entailed property, he directed a will to be immediately drawn up, acknowledging his grandchild, and leaving to him all his personal property, which was very considerable; and praying the vicar to take upon himself the office of guardian to the boy,—a request which was cheerfully complied with. The admiral would not listen to the repeated requests of the vicar, to take the repose which his excited and sinking frame required, until the necessary document had been drawn out, signed, and duly witnessed. When all was complete, he fell back on the pillow, in such a state of exhaustion as threatened immediately to terminate his career. It was late when the vicar took his leave, after

having administered some little consolation to the repentant and dying man, and promised to call upon him early on the ensuing morning.

But the vicar had other duties to perform, which induced him to defer his visit until the following noon. Others were sick, others were dying, and needed spiritual consolation ; and he made no distinction between the rich and the poor. The physicians had expressed their opinion that the admiral might linger for many days, and the vicar thought that advantage might be derived from his being left for a short time to his own reflections, and to recover from the state of exhaustion arising from the communications of the preceding evening. When he arrived at the hall, the windows were closed—Admiral De Courcy was no more.

Reader, you shall hear how he died. It was about two o'clock in the morning that he awoke from an uneasy slumber, and felt his end approaching. The old crone who had been hired as a nurse to watch at night, was fast asleep in

her chair. The rushlight had burned low down in the socket, and, through the interstices of its pierced shade, threw a feeble and alternate light and shadow over the room. The mouth of the dying man was glued together from internal heat, and he suffered from agonising thirst. He murmured for relief, but no one answered. Again and again he attempted to make his careless attendant acquainted with his wants, but in vain. He stretched out his arm and moved the curtains of the bed, that the noise of the curtain-rings upon the iron rods might have the effect, and then fell back with exhaustion, arising from the effort which he had made.

The old beldame, who, for money, was willing to undertake the most revolting offices, and who, without remuneration, was so hardened, by her constant familiarity with disease and death, that she was callous and insensible to the most earnest supplication, woke up at the noise which the curtain-rings had made, and opened the curtain, to ascertain what was required.

Long experience told her at once that all would soon be over, and she was convinced that her charge would never rise or speak again.

This was true ; but the suffering man (his arm lying outside of the bed-clothes, and his elbow bent upwards) still pointed with his finger to his parched mouth, with a look of entreaty from his sinking eyes. The old fiend shut the curtains, and the admiral waited with impatience for them to reopen with the drop of water “ to cool his parched tongue ”—but in vain. Leaving him to his fate, she hobbled about the room to secure a golden harvest, before others should make their appearance, and share it with her. His purse was on the table ; she removed the gold which it contained, and left the silver ; she chose that which she imagined to be the most valuable of the three rings on the dressing table ; she detached one seal from the chain of his watch. She then repaired to the wardrobe, and examined its contents. One of her capacious pockets was soon filled

with the finest cambric handkerchiefs, all of which she first took the precaution to open, and hold up to the light, rejecting those which were not of the finest texture. The silk stockings were the next articles that were coveted; they were unfolded one by one, and her skinny arm passed up, that the feet might be extended by her shrivelled hands, to ascertain whether they were darned or not—if so, they were rejected.

The wardrobe was on the opposite side of the bed; and on that side the curtains had not been closed. The dying man had still enough sight left to perceive the employment of his attendant. What must have been his feelings! He uttered a deep groan, which startled the old hag, and she repaired to the bed-side, to examine the state of her charge.

Again he pointed with his finger to his mouth—and again she returned to her employment, without having rendered the assistance which he required. His eyes followed—and

his finger still pointed. Having ransacked every drawer, and secured all that she dared take, or that her pockets could contain, she rang the bell for the servants of the house; then pulling out her handkerchief, ready to put to her eyes in token of sympathy, she sat down on her easy chair, to await their coming.

In the mean while, the eyes of the unfortunate man gradually turned upward; his vision was gone, but his agonising thirst continued to the last: and when the retainers of the family came in, he was found dead, with his finger still pointing in the same direction.

With ordinary minds, there is something so terrible in death, something so awful in the dissolution of the elements of our frame, something so horrible in the leap into the dark abyss, that it requires all the powers of a fortified spirit, all the encouragement of a good conscience, and all the consolations of religion and of faith, to enable us to muster any degree of resolution for the awful change. But if aught can smooth

the pillow, can chase away from the terrified spirit the doubt and depression by which it is overwhelmed, it is the being surrounded and attended by those who are devoted and endeared to us. When love, and duty, and charity, and sympathy hover round the couch of the departing, fainting hope is supported by their presence, and the fleeting spirit, directed by them, looks upward to the realms from which these heaven-born passions have been permitted to descend on earth, to cheer us through our weary pilgrimage.

What then had Admiral De Courcy to support him in his last moments?—A good conscience?—faith?—hope?—love?—duty?—or even sympathy? Wanting all, he breathed his last. But, let us

“Forbear to judge, for we are sinners all.
Close up his eyes, and draw the curtains close,
And let us all to meditation.”

The vicar affixed seals upon the drawers, to

secure the remainder of the property, (for the example of the old nurse had been followed by many others), and, having given directions for the funeral, returned to his own home.

The second day after the admiral's death, a carriage and four drove furiously up the avenue, and stopped at the entrance door. The occupants descended, and rang the bells with an air of authority; the summons was answered by several of the male domestics, who were anxiously looking out for the new proprietor of the domain. A tall man, of very gentleman-like appearance, followed by a mean looking personage in black, walked in, the latter, as he followed, proclaiming the other to the servants as the heir at law, and present owner of the property. By this time the whole household were assembled, lining the hall for the visitors to pass, and bowing and curtsying to the ground. The vicar, who had expected the appearance of these parties, had left directions that he might be immediately

acquainted with their arrival. On receipt of the information, he proceeded to the hall, and was ushered into the library, where he found them anxiously awaiting his arrival, that the seals might be withdrawn which had been placed upon the drawers.

“Whom have I the honour of addressing, Sir?” said the vicar to the taller of the two, whom he presumed, by his appearance, to be the superior.

“Sir,” replied the little man, in a pompous manner, “you are speaking to Mr. Rainscourt, the heir at law of this entailed property.”

“I am sorry, truly sorry, Sir,” replied the vicar, “that from not having been well informed, you should be subjected to such severe disappointment. I am afraid, Sir, that the grandchild of Admiral De Courcy will have a prior claim.”

The two parties started from their chairs, and looked at each other in amazement.

“The grandchild!” replied the little man—
“never even heard that there was such a person.”

“Very probably, Sir; but I have long known it, and so did Admiral De Courcy, as you will perceive when you read his will, which is in my possession, as guardian to the child—and upon the strength of which office I have put seals upon the property.”

The parties looked aghast.

“We must inquire into this,” replied the legal adviser, for such he was.

“I am ready to give you any information you may require,” replied the vicar. “I have here copies of the marriage certificate of the parents, and the register of baptism of the child, the originals of which you will find in the parish church of —, not five miles distant; and I can most satisfactorily prove his identity, should that be necessary.”

“And where is the grandchild?”

“ At sea, on board a man-of-war, at the dying request of his father, who determined that he should be brought up for the service. Would you like to see the late admiral's will ?”

The tall gentleman bowed assent, and it was read. Having been carefully examined by the lawyer, as well as the other documents in the vicar's possession, all appeared so clear and conclusive, that he unwillingly acknowledged to his employer, in a whisper, that there was no chance of setting the will aside. Pallid with the revulsion of feelings from hope to despair, the pretender to the estates ordered the horses to be brought out, and, on their being announced, with a slight bow to the vicar, retired from the library.

But outside, the state of affairs was altered, by the servants having overheard the conversation. No one was attentive enough to open the door to let out those whom they had so obsequiously admitted ; and one of the postilions was

obliged to dismount, to shut up the chaise after they had entered it. Such is the deference shewn respectively to those who are, or are not, the real heirs at law.

CHAPTER XVI.

On deck five hundred men did dance,
The stoutest they could find in France,
We with two hundred did advance,
On board of the Arethusa.
Our captain hailed the Frenchman "ho!"
The Frenchman then cried out "hallo!"
"Bear down, d'ye see,
To our Admiral's lee;"
"No, no," says the Frenchman, "that can't be;"
"Then I must lug you along with me."
Says the saucy Arethusa.

Sea Song.

THE information received from M^eElvina, which induced Captain M—— not to anchor, was relative to a French frigate of the largest class, that he had great hopes of falling in with. She was lying in the harbour of Brest, waiting for a detachment of troops which had been ordered to be embarked, when she was to sail for

Rochefort, to join a squadron intended to make a descent upon some of our colonies. Previously to M^cElvina's sailing from the port of Havre, the prefect of that arrondissement had issued directions for certain detachments to march on a stated day to complete the number of troops ordered on board.

M^cElvina had sure data from which to calculate as to the exact period of embarkation, and was also aware that the frigate had orders to sail to the port of rendezvous the first favourable wind after the embarkation had taken place. In two days the *Aspasia*, for that was the name of the frigate, commanded by Captain M——, was off Ushant, and the Captain taking the precaution to keep well off the land during the day-time, only running in to make the lights after dark, retained his position off that island until the wind shifted to the northward; he then shaped a course so as to fall in with the French coast about thirty miles to the southward of the harbour of Brest. It was still dark when Cap-

tain M——, having run his distance, shortened sail, and hove to in the cruising ground which M^cElvina had recommended; and so correct was the calculation, as well as the information of the captain of the smugglers, that at day-break, as the frigate lay with her head in-shore, with the wind at N.N.W., a large vessel was descried under the land, a little on her weather-bow. After severely scrutinising the stranger for some minutes with his glass, which he now handed to M^cElvina—

“That’s she, indeed, I believe,” said Captain M——.

“A large frigate, with studding-sails set, standing across our bows,” cried out the first-lieutenant, from the mast-head.

“She’ll try for the Passage du Raz; we must cut her off, if we can. Hands, make sail.”

The hands were summoned up by the shrill pipe of the boatswain and his mates; but it was quite unnecessary, as the men had already crowded on deck upon the first report which

had been communicated below, and were in clusters on the forecastle and gangways.

“Topmen, aloft! loose top-gallant sails and royals—clear away the flying-jib,” were orders that were hardly out of the mouth of the first-lieutenant, breathless with his rapid descent from aloft, when the gaskets were off, and the sails hung fluttering from the yards. In another minute the sheets were home, the sails hoisted and trimmed, and the *Aspasia* darted through the yielding waves, as if the eagerness of pursuit which quickened the pulses of her crew had been communicated from them like an electric shock to her own frames, and she were conscious that her country demanded her best exertions.

“Pipe the hammocks up, Mr. Hardy,” said Captain M—— to the first-lieutenant; “when they are stowed we will beat to quarters.”

“Ay, ay, Sir. Shall we order the fire out in the galley?”

“When the cocoa is ready, not before—there will be plenty of time for the people to get their

breakfasts. How does the land bear, Mr. Bowling?"

"Saint Island about S.E. by S. eight or nine miles, Sir," replied the master.

"If so, I think we shall cut him off, and then 'fight he must.'"

Both frigates had hoisted their colours in defiance, and as they were steering for the same point, they neared each other fast. The French vessel, with his starboard studding sails, running for the entrance of the narrow passage, which he hoped to gain, and the *Aspasia* close-hauled to intercept him, and at the same time to avoid the dangerous rocks to leeward, far extending from Saint Island, whose name they bore.

"Have the men had their breakfasts, Mr. Hardy?" said the captain.

"The cocoa was in the tub, Sir," answered the first-lieutenant, "ready for serving out; but they started it all in the lee-scuppers. They wanted the tub to fill it with shot."

Captain M—— smiled at the enthusiasm of

his crew; but the smile was suddenly checked, as he reflected that probably many of the fine fellows would never breakfast again.

“If not contrary to your regulations, Captain M——,” said M^cElvina, “as the crew of the *Susanne* have not yet been incorporated with your ship’s company, may I request that they may be stationed together, and that I may be permitted to be with them?”

“Your suggestion is good,” replied the captain, “and I am obliged to you for the offer. They shall assist to work the quarter-deck carronades, and act as boarders and sail-trimmers. *Mr. Hardy*, let the new men be provided with cutlasses, and fill up any vacancies in the main-deck quarters, from some of our own men who are at present stationed at the quarter-deck guns.”

The frigates were now within gun-shot of each other, and it was impossible to say which vessel would first attain the desired goal. The foremost guns of the respective ships which

had been trained forward, were reported to bear upon the enemy, and both commanders were aware that "knocking away a stick," *i. e.*, the shot striking the masts or yards of her opponent, so as to occasion them to fall, would decide the point. At the very time that Captain M—— was giving directions to fire the main-deck guns as they would bear, the first shot from his antagonist whizzed over his head, and the action commenced, each party attempting to cripple his opponent by firing high at his masts and rigging. The frigates continued to engage, until they had closed to within half-a-mile of each other, when the main-top-mast of the Frenchman fell over the side.

This decided the point as to his escape through the passage, which he had made his utmost exertions to effect, in pursuance of the peremptory orders which he had received. He now hauled his wind on the same tack as the *Aspasia*, pouring in his starboard broadside as he rounded-to. The manœuvre was good, as he

thereby retained his weather-guage—and the wreck of his top-mast having fallen over his larboard side, he had his starboard broadside, which was all clear, directed towards his opponent ; moreover, he forced the *Aspasia* to follow him into the bay formed between the *Bec du Raz* and the *Bec du Chèvre*, where she would in all probability receive considerable damage from the batteries which lined the coast.

Captain M—— was aware of all this ; but his only fear was, that his enemy should run on shore, and prevent his carrying him into port. The *Aspasia* was soon abreast of her opponent, and their broadsides were exchanged, when Captain M——, who wished to bring the action to a speedy conclusion, shot his vessel ahead, which he was enabled to do, from his superiority of sailing, after the main-top-mast of the French frigate had been shot away. It was his intention not to have tacked until he could have fetched his antagonist, but the galling fire of the batteries, which now hulled him every time, induced

him to go about, and, as he was in stays, a raking shot entered the cabin windows, and in its passage along the main-deck, added ten men to his list of killed and wounded.

Again the frigates, on opposite tacks, poured in their broadsides—the fore-yard of the Frenchman was divided in the slings, and fell, hanging by the topsail-sheets and lifts, and tearing the sail, which fell over the forecastle guns, and caught fire as they were discharged at the same moment. Nor did the *Aspasia* suffer less, for her mizen-top-mast was shot through, and her star-board anchor, cut from her bows, fell under her bottom and tore away the cable, (a short range of which Captain M—— had had the precaution to have on deck, as they fought so close in shore). This threw the men at the guns into confusion, and brought the ship up in the wind. The cable was at last separated, and flew out of the hawse-hole after the anchor, which plunged to the bottom; but this was not effected, until, like an enormous serpent, it had enfolded in its embraces three or four hapless

men, who were carried with dreadful velocity to the hawse-hole, where their crushed bodies for a time stopped it from running out, and gave their shipmates an opportunity of dividing it with their axes.

Order was eventually restored, and the *Aspasia*, who had been raked by her active opponent during the time that she was thrown up in the wind, continued her course, and as she passed the stern of the French frigate, luffed up and returned the compliment. The latter, anxious in his crippled state for the support of the batteries, which had already seriously injured his opponent, continued to forge in shore.

“We shall weather her now ; ’bout ship, Mr. Bowling. Recollect, my lads,” said Captain M——, when the ship was about, “you’ll reserve your fire till we touch her sides ; then all hands to board.”

The *Aspasia* ranged up on the weather-quarter of her antagonist—Bowling, the master,

conning her by the captain's directions, so that the fore-chains of the French vessel should be hooked by the spare anchor of the *Aspasia*. The enemy, who, in his disabled state, was not in a situation to choose whether he would be boarded or not, poured in a double-shotted and destructive broadside, and it was well for Captain M—— that his ship's company had received the reinforcement which they had from the *Susanne*, for the French frigate was crowded with men, and being now within pistol-shot, the troops who were so thick on deck as to impede the motions of each other, kept up an incessant fire of musquetry, cutting the *Aspasia's* running rigging, riddling her sails, and disabling her men.

“Hard-a-port now!” cried Bowling, and the vessels came in collision, the spare anchor in the *Aspasia's* fore-chains catching and tearing away the back-stays and laniards of the enemy's fore-rigging, and, with a violent jerk, bringing down the fore-top-mast to windward. At

this moment the reserved broadside of the *Aspasia* was discharged, and the two frigates heeled over opposite ways, from the violent concussion of the air in the confined space between them. While yet enveloped in the smoke, the men flew up on deck, as they had been previously directed by Captain M——, who leaped upon the quarter-deck hammocks of his own frigate, and, holding with one hand by the mizen-top-mast back-stay, with his sword in the other, waving to encourage his men, waited a second or two for the closing of the after-parts of the vessels, before he led on his boarders.

The smoke rolled away through the masts of the French frigate, and discovered her captain, with equal disregard to his safety, in nearly a similar position on the hammock rails of his own vessel. The rival commanders were not six feet apart, when the main-chains of the two vessels crashed as they came in collision. The French captain drew a pistol from his belt and levelled it at Captain M——, whose fate ap-

peared to be certain ; when, at the critical moment, a hat, thrown from the quarter-deck of the *Aspasia*, right into the face of the Frenchman, blinded him for the moment, and his pistol went off without taking effect.

“ Capital shot, that, Willy !” cried M^cElvina, as he sprang from the hammocks with his sword, “ giving point” in advance, and, while still darting through the air with the impetus of his spring, passing it through the body of the French captain, who fell back on his own quarter-deck, while M^cElvina, fortunately for himself, dropped into the chains, for had he a hundred lives, they would have fallen a sacrifice to the exasperated Frenchmen ; but the smugglers had followed M^cElvina, and Captain M——, with the rest of his ship’s company, were thronging, like bees, in the rigging, hammocks, and chains of their opponent. From the destructive fire of the French troops, many an English seaman fell dead, or, severely wounded, was reserved for a worse fate,—that of falling overboard between

the ships, and, at the heave of the sea, being crushed between their sides. Many a gallant spirit was separated from its body by this horrid death, as the strife continued.

Possession was at length gained of the quarter-deck ; but the carnage was not to cease. The French troops stationed in the boats on the booms, formed a sort of pyramid, vomiting incessant fire ; and the commandant had had the sagacity to draw up three lines of his men, with their bayonets fixed, from one side of the vessel to the other, abreast of the gangways, forming a barrier, behind which the crew of the French frigate had retreated, and which was impenetrable to the gallant crew of the *Aspasia*, who were only provided with short cutlasses.

Captain M——, as he saw his men falling on every side, and every attempt to force a passage unsuccessful, although accompanied with heavy loss of lives, found himself, as it were, in a trap. To force his way through appeared impossible—to retreat was against his nature. M^cElvina,

who had been fighting by his side, perceived the awkward and dangerous predicament they were in, and his ready talent suggested a remedy. Calling out loudly, "Susanne's! away there!—follow me!" an order instantly obeyed by his men, he disappeared with them over the hammocks, leaping back upon the quarter-deck of the *Aspasia*.

"Curses on the smuggler, he has run for it. At them again, my Britons, never mind," cried the first-lieutenant, leading on the men against the phalanx of bayonets. But it was not as the first-lieutenant had supposed; for before the cutlasses of the seamen had time again to strike fire upon the steel points which opposed their passage, M^cElvina reappeared in the fore-rigging of the French vessel, followed by his smugglers, who attacked the French troops in the rear, with a loud yell, and an impetuosity that was irresistible. The diversion was announced by a cheer from Captain M—— and his party abaft, who, rushing upon the bayonets

of the Frenchmen, already in confusion from the attack of M^cElvina, forced them down on the main-deck, and in a few minutes the hatches were secured over the remainder of the crew, and the tricolored ensign disappeared from the gaff, and announced to the spectators in the batteries on shore that “*Britannia ruled the waves.*”

CHAPTER XVII.

Brave hearts ! to Britain's pride
Once so faithful and so true,
On the deck of fame that died
With the gallant, good Riou,—
Soft sigh the winds of Heaven o'er their grave,
While the billow mournful rolls,
And the mermaid's song condoles,
Singing glory to the souls
Of the brave !

CAMPBELL.

HASTY congratulations between the survivors of the victorious party were exchanged as they proceeded to obey the orders which were issued by Captain M——, who directed their attention to the relief of the wounded, lying in heaps upon the deck, in many instances nearly smothered with the dead bodies which had fallen upon them, and which their own exhausted

powers would not permit them to remove. The task of separation of those who were past all mortal aid from those who might still derive benefit from surgical assistance, was as tedious as it was afflicting. No distinction was made between the rival sufferers, but, as they came to hand, English or French, they were carefully conveyed to the half-decks of the respective ships, the surgeons of which were in readiness to receive them, their shirt-sleeves turned up to the elbows, and hands and arms stained with blood, proving that they had already been actively employed in the duties of their profession.

On the foremost part of the larboard-side of the French frigate's quarter-deck, where Captain M—— and his crew had boarded, the dead and dying lay in a heap, the summit of which was level with the tops of the carronades that they were between ; and an occasional low groan from under the mass, intimated that some were there who were dying more from the pres-

sure of the other bodies, than from the extent of their own wounds.

Captain M——, although he had lost much blood and was still bleeding profusely, would not leave the deck until he had collected a party to separate the pile ; and many were relieved, who, in a few minutes more, would have been suffocated.

At the bottom of the heap was the body of the gallant French captain ; and Captain M—— was giving directions to the first-lieutenant to have it carried below, when Willy, who was earnestly looking about the deck, brushed up against the latter, who said to him—

“ Come, youngster, out of the way, you’re no use here.”

“ Has any one seen my hat ? ” interrogated the boy, as he obeyed the order, and removed to a short distance.

“ Here it is, my Bantam,” said one of the boatswain’s-mates, who had discovered it as they removed the body of the French cap-

tain, under which it had lain, jammed as flat as a pancake.

“ Then it was to you that I was indebted for that well-timed assistance,” said Captain M——, taking the hat from the boatswain’s-mate, and restoring it as well as he could to its former shape before he put it on Willy’s head.

Willy looked up in the captain’s face and smiled assent, as he walked away.

“ A good turn is never lost,” observed Captain M——; “ and the old fable of the mouse and the lion is constantly recurring to make us humble. If I had not put that boy on the quarter-deck, I should in all probability have made a vacancy. It was remarkable presence of mind on his part.”

We have not broken in upon our narrative to state, that, during the scene we have described, Mr. Bowling, the master, had succeeded in putting both vessels before the wind, although they still were hugged in each other’s embraces, as if they had always been the best friends in the

world, and they were now out of the reach of the enemy's batteries, which, (as soon as they perceived the unfavourable results of the action,) had commenced firing with red hot balls, emblematical of their wrath.

When the wounded had been carried below, and placed in comparative comfort on board of their respective ships, the dead bodies were next examined. Those of the French (with the exception of that of the captain) were launched overboard; while those of the English were carried to their own frigate, the only instance in which any difference was shewn between the rival sufferers. The hatches were then removed, and the French officers, having delivered up their swords, were permitted to remain on deck upon parole, while the men were secured down below in the fore and main holds of the *Aspasia*, the hatchways being covered over with a strong splinter-netting, that they might not be deprived of fresh air in their crowded situation. The charge of the prize having been confided to the

first-lieutenant and fifty men, the two ships were separated, and laid to, to repair the damages sustained in the conflict.

Captain M——, whose wounds were not serious, had descended for a short time to have them washed and dressed. His anxiety to put his ship in an efficient state, and get clear of the bay, previously to bad weather coming on, had induced him to return on deck as soon as he had taken a little refreshment.

M^cElvina had also cleansed himself from the gore with which he had been begrimed, and, having applied to the surgeon to assuage the pain of a severe cut which he had received on his shoulder, came upon the quarter-deck with his arm in a sling, dressed with his usual precision and neatness. He touched his hat to Captain M——, with whom he had not communicated since he had quitted him on the quarter-deck of the French frigate, to create the fortunate diversion in favour of the boarders.

“Captain M^cElvina,” said Captain M——,

taking his hand and shaking it warmly, "I can hardly express how much I am obliged to you for your conduct this day. You may be assured that, upon my return, I shall not fail to make a proper representation of it to government. I only wish that there was any situation in my ship that could induce you to remain."

"Thank you, Captain M——," replied M^cElvina, smiling; "but, although on a smaller scale, I have long been accustomed to command; and I should be very sorry that a vacancy should occur in the only situation that I would accept."

"I expected an answer to that effect," replied Captain M——. "However, you have this day nobly redeemed your character, and silenced any imputations of hostility to your country that might be thrown upon you in consequence of your late employment; and I sincerely congratulate you."

"Captain M——, as you are kind enough to express friendly feelings towards me, may I

request they may be shewn by the interest you take in young Seymour? I cannot but approve his following the honourable career marked out for him, and my regret at parting with one who has so entwined himself round my heart, will be considerably lessened by the assurance that you will be his friend and protector. Any expenses—”

“Not one word upon that score,” replied Captain M——: “the boy saved my life this day by his unusual presence of mind, and I shall watch over him as if he were my own child.”

“His education?”

“Shall be attended to. I pledge you my honour to do him every justice.”

McElvina bowed, and walked away to the other side of the quarter-deck; the idea of parting with Willy was always painful to him, and, weak with the loss of blood, he was afraid that the emotion would be perceived, which he now felt less able to control.

Thus it is with proud man. He struggles to conceal effects arising from feelings which do honour to his nature ; but feels no shame when he disgraces himself by allowing his passions to get the better of his reason—and all because he would not be thought *womanish* ! I'm particularly fond of crying myself.

The list of killed and wounded was brought up by the second-lieutenant, (the duty of the first, who was in charge of the prize, having devolved upon him)—the former having been ascertained by mustering the ship's company, the latter from the report of the surgeon.

A deep sigh escaped from the breast of the captain as he looked down at the total. "Forty-four killed—sixty-seven wounded ! This is heavy indeed ! Poor Stevenson, I thought he was only wounded."

"Since dead, Sir," replied the second-lieutenant ; "we have lost a pleasant messmate."

"And his Majesty a valuable officer," re-

plied the captain. "I am afraid his mother will feel it in more ways than one—he supported her, I think."

"He did, Sir; will you not give an acting order to one of the young gentlemen?" (It was the third lieutenant over whom they were lamenting.)

"Yes, make it out for Mr. Robertson."

"He's in the list, Sir."

"What! killed? So he is, poor fellow! Well, then,—Mr. Wheatley—let it be made out for him."

"Ay, ay, Sir."

It was not until the ensuing day that the loss of the enemy could be ascertained. Crowded as were her decks with troops, it was enormous. Not only the first and second-captains, second-lieutenant, and seven junior officers of the frigate had fallen, but eleven officers of the detachment of soldiers sent on board of her. The total loss appeared to be one hundred and forty-seven killed, and one hundred and eighty-four

wounded, out of an aggregate of nearly nine hundred men.

In a few days the *Aspasia* and her prize arrived at Plymouth, the English colours proudly waving over the tricolored flag of her late opponent, and both vessels ran into Hamoaze, amidst the cheers of thousands of spectators, assembled upon Mount Wise and Mount Edgecomb to greet their gallant and successful defenders. Captain M—— immediately proceeded to London, where the representation which he made of M^cElvina's conduct was followed by an order for his immediate release, and M^cElvina, taking an affectionate leave of Willy, with a parting injunction to "*be honest*," set off to report to old Hornblow, and his daughter Susan, all the circumstances attending the capture of his lugger, and the events which had subsequently ensued.

CHAPTER XVIII.

So: poverty at home, and debts abroad !

My present fortune bad ; my hopes yet worse !

What will become of me ?

Southeron's Isabella.

THE gentleman who had supposed himself the next heir to the entailed property, vacant by the demise of Admiral De Courcy, and whose hasty visit and departure from —— Hall we have mentioned in a previous chapter, was a third cousin of the deceased. His history is short. He had squandered away the personal property left him by his father ; and his family estate,

which was of greater extent than value, was mortgaged for even more than it was worth. He had latterly subsisted by borrowing large sums of money, at exorbitant interest, upon the expectancy of succeeding to the property of Admiral De Courcy. The result of his visit to the hall was, therefore, unsatisfactory in more ways than one ; and before he had arrived at his own residence, his obsequious little friend in black had reminded him of certain bonds which were in his possession, and assumed a tone and demeanour towards his client very different from that in which he had addressed the supposed inheritor of the large property of D—— ; intimating, in very plain terms, that some speedy arrangement must be made.

Rainscourt, who had nothing left except the old castle on his property at Galway, his manorial rights, and the unbounded attachment and devotion of the wild tenants, who looked upon him as their feudal chieftain, felt convinced that he had no resource but to escape from his nume-

rous creditors, who would not hesitate to put him in durance, and whose impatience had been with difficulty restrained until the death of the admiral. The *speedy arrangement* upon which he determined was, to set off immediately for Ireland, and, by regaining his castle, defy legal authority,—if there could be found any that would be rash enough to attempt his person, when encircled by his lawless retainers.

As he descended from the chaise, at the handsomely furnished lodgings, in the west end of the metropolis, which he had engaged, his companion informed him, with a haughty air, that he would have the honour of paying his respects on the ensuing noon; while Rainscourt, with his usual indifference to money, dismissed the post-boys with a handsome gratuity, although there were not many guineas left in his purse; and then proceeded up to the drawing-room, on the first floor, where his wife and only daughter were anxiously awaiting his arrival.

Mrs. Rainscourt, still a fine and elegant

woman, had, in her youth, been remarkable for her great personal attractions; and, for two seasons, had been considered as the belle of the Irish metropolis. She was, at that period, a high spirited, and generous minded girl, easily provoked, and as easily appeased,—proud of her beauty and her accomplishments, which her worldly-minded parents were in hopes would be bartered for a coronet. Rainscourt was also, at that time, one of the handsomest, if not the handsomest man in Ireland, with the advantage of polished manners, talent, and ancient birth. Received and courted in every society, he was as indefatigable in squandering away his property, as the parents of Mrs. Rainscourt were in trying to obtain an advantageous establishment for their daughter. Rainscourt was proud and overbearing in disposition: vain, to excess, of his personal advantages, he considered himself to be irresistible with the other sex. He had seen and admired his future spouse; but still, as he required an alliance which would enable

him to indulge in his extravagance, and as her parents were aware that Rainscourt was, or would soon be, a ruined man, in all probability they would never have come in contact, but have rolled in different orbits, more consonant to their views and their happiness, had it not occurred that, at a large and convivial party, Rainscourt's vanity had been piqued by his companions, who told him that he never could obtain the hand of Miss ——, whose parents aspired to a higher connexion. Piqued at the remark, and flushed with the wine that had been freely circulated, he offered to stake a considerable sum that he would succeed before a certain allotted time. The wager was accepted. Rainscourt courted without affection; and, by his assiduities and feigned attachment, ultimately succeeded in persuading the fond girl to destroy all the golden visions of her parents, and resign herself to his arms, where he assured her that competence and love would be found

more than commensurate to a coronet and neglect.

They eloped ;—all Dublin was in an uproar for three days. Rainscourt received the amount of his bet, and the congratulations of his friends, and for a short time he and his wife lived together without any serious fracas. The first that occurred proceeded from an anonymous letter, evidently written by some envious and disappointed female, acquainting Mrs. Rainscourt with all the circumstances attending the bet, to which she had been sacrificed. This mortifying news was received with showers of tears, and some upbraiding : for Mrs. Rainscourt really loved her husband ; and although patched up by Rainscourt's protestations, as to the falsehood of the accusation, it sunk deep into her heart, and was but the forerunner of future misery.

Rainscourt soon became tired of a woman whom he had never loved ; cursed his own vanity, that had induced him to saddle himself

with such an incumbrance as a wife; and, by alternate violence and moroseness, irritated her feelings, and roused her spirit. Neglect on his part produced indifference on her side; and as the means of gaiety and expense melted away, so did all respect and esteem for each other.

An extravagant man seldom makes a good husband: he becomes embarrassed, and his circumstances prey upon his mind, and sour his temper. A woman who has, before marriage, been the admiration of the metropolis, is not very likely to prove a good wife. She still sighs for the adulation that she received, and which, from habit, has become necessary to her, and would exact from the man for whom she has given up the world, all the attention that she has lost by the sacrifice.

Mr. and Mrs. Rainscourt were joined—but they were not one. Like many others in this world of error, their marriage might be typified by a vial, of which one half has been filled with

oil, and the other with water, having a cork in its mouth, which confined them, and forced them to remain in contact, although they refused to unite. The fruit of this marriage was one daughter, now about six years old.

“ Well, Mr. Rainscourt, all is well, I hope ; and may I not kiss my daughter, and congratulate her upon being one of the largest heiresses in the kingdom ? ”

“ You may, if you please, Madam.”

“ May, if I please ? Why, is it not so, Mr. Rainscourt ? ” replied the lady, startled at the moody brow of her husband, as he threw himself on the sofa.

Now Rainscourt would not have so immediately answered the question, but he was determined that his spouse should participate in those pangs of disappointment which swelled his own breast ; as partner of all his joys, she was, of course, fully entitled to an equal proportion of his cares.

“ No, Madam—it is not so.”

“Surely you are trifling with me, Mr. Rainscourt; is not the admiral dead?”

“Yes, Madam; and his grandchild is alive.”

“His grandchild!” cried the lady, in *alto*, pallid with vexation and disappointment.

“Well, Mr. Rainscourt, this is another specimen of your usual prudence and foresight. What man, in his senses, would not have ascertained such a fact, previous to squandering away his whole property, and leaving his daughter a beggar?”

“I think, Madam, if the property has been squandered, as you term it, that you have assisted me in so doing; at all events, the property was my own: for I cannot exactly recollect that you increased it one shilling when I married you.”

“Certainly, not much, Mr. Rainscourt, except, indeed, the amount of the bet. I consider that as my marriage portion,” replied the lady, with a sneer.

“ Never made a worse bet in my life,” replied the gentleman, throwing his legs upon the sofa.

“ Perhaps not,” replied his wife, with offended seriousness ; “ but recollect, Mr. Rainscourt, that *you* have no one to blame but yourself—*you* were not deceived. I might have been happy—might have met with sincerity and reciprocal affection. Your conduct towards me was an act of cruelty, which would have called forth some compunction in the breast of my bitterest enemy ; and yet, unoffending, I was heartlessly sacrificed to your vanity.”

“ Say, rather to your own, which blinded you, or you would have been able to discriminate better.”

Mrs. Rainscourt burst into tears. Before her emotion could be controlled, her husband, who was hardened to these scenes of alternate anger and grief, either was, or pretended to be, in a sound sleep.

The little girl had nestled close to her mother at the ebullition of her feelings, and waited in silence until it was exhausted.

"Why, mamma, I thought you said we should be so happy now."

"Did I, my dear?" replied Mrs. Rainscourt, mournfully.

"Yes, you did, and told me that we should have a fine house in London, and that we should not go back to the old castle again. I was sorry for that, though. Where shall we go now, mamma?"

"God knows, my child; you must ask your father."

"Papa's asleep, and I must not wake him. I do hope we shall go back to the castle."

"Then you'll have your wish, my love," replied Mr. Rainscourt, rousing up, "for I start this very evening."

"Are we to go with you, Mr. Rainscourt?" asked Mrs. Rainscourt, calmly, "or are we to be left here?"

“As you please ; but I must be off, for that little scoundrel, T——, threatened me with a visit to-morrow morning, as I got out of the chaise, and I am aware that he will not come without a companion or two.”

“T—— ! What, T——? your friend T——! that you brought from Dublin with you, and who professes so much admiration and esteem—your own factotum?”

“Yes, my own factotum—snivelling little scoundrel. But, however, there’s no time to be lost. You have some jewels, my dear, and other articles of value ; you had better pack them up, and consign them to me as soon as possible. You may then take your choice,—go with me now, or follow me in a day or two. They cannot arrest *you*.”

“I am aware of that, Mr. Rainscourt,” replied the lady ; “but as I may not have the means of following, my daughter and I will, if you please, become a part of your travelling

encumbrance, as well as the jewels and *other* articles of value."

"Be it so," replied the gentleman, who perfectly understood her sarcastic meaning, but did not think it advisable to retort at the moment; "one post-chaise will carry us all; but we must leave town at twelve o'clock this night. If I recollect right, we are asked to a rout at Lady G——'s?"

"We are; but pray, Mr. Rainscourt, how am I to get ready so soon? The servants must be paid—all the bills must be called in."

"If you wait until I can pay all the bills, you must wait till eternity, perhaps. Pack up every thing of value that is portable, without the knowledge of the servants; your jewels you can have upon your own person, or in a pocket, if you ever wear one. Order the carriage—dress, and we will both go to the rout. I shall leave word with Roberts to bring me any letters which may be sent, telling him that the admiral

is not dead yet, although hourly expected—nothing has transpired to the contrary. I can slip away from the rout, and write the letter myself, which I will send by a porter. When I go home, and the chaise, which I shall order, is at the door, I will put Emily in it, and call for you at Lady G——'s. The servants may suspect something, but it will then be too late.”

Danger will unite those who are at variance. Mrs. R—— entered readily into the proposed arrangements, which necessity imposed upon them, and in a few hours, father, mother, and daughter were on their way to Ireland, leaving the house-rent, butchers, bakers, chandlers, and all other bills, of no trifling sum total, to be paid at some more favourable opportunity. The servants indemnified themselves as well as they could, by seizing what was left, and cursing the elopers; and the obsequious little gentleman in black vowed vengeance as he quitted the de-

sented mansion, to which he had paid his promised visit in the morning, with a particular friend or two, to enforce his arguments with Mr. Rainscourt.

CHAPTER XIX.

Fal. Have you provided me here half a dozen sufficient men ?

Shal. Marry have we, Sir.

Fal. Let me see them, I beseech you.

Shal. Where's the roll ? where's the roll ?

————— Let them appear as I call.

SHAKSPEARE.

As the reader will have a more intimate acquaintance with them hereafter, I must now enter into some description of the characters of the captain and officers, with whom our hero was fated to be a shipmate. To begin with the captain, who has already made his appearance in the course of these pages :—

Captain M—— was the son of a north

country gentleman—one of the numerous class still existing in this world, who have inherited large ideas and small fortunes. As usual, the latter were got rid of much sooner than the former. The consequence was, that although young M—— was an only son, it was considered advisable that he should be brought up to some profession. The naval service was selected by himself, and approved of by his father, who, although he had no money, had some interest,—that is to say, he had powerful and wealthy connexions, who, for their own sakes, rather than have to support their young relation, would exert themselves to make him independent.

M—— rose to the rank of post-captain as fast as his friends could wish, and did credit to their patronage. Having once obtained for him the highest rank that the profession could offer, until he became an admiral from seniority, they thought they had done enough; and had it not been that Captain M——, by his zeal and abilities, had secured a personal interest

at the Board, he might have languished on half pay; but his services were appreciated, and he was too good an officer not to be employed. His father was dead, and the payment of debts which he had contracted, and the purchase of an annuity for his mother, had swallowed up almost all the prize money, which Captain M——, who had been very successful, had realised; but he was single from choice, and frugal from habit. His pay, and the interest of the small remains of prize money in the funds, were more than adequate to his wants. He was enthusiastic in his profession, and had the bad taste to prefer a fine ship to a fine lady.

Having entered the service at a later period than was usual, he had the advantage of an excellent education, which, being naturally of a serious disposition, and fond of reading, he had very much improved by study. As an officer he was a perfect master of his profession, both in theory and practice, and was what is

termed afloat, "all for the service." Indeed this feeling was so powerful in him, that, like Aaron's rod, it swallowed up all the rest. If there was any blemish in his character, it was in this point. Correct himself, he made no allowance for indiscretion; inflexibly severe, but always just, he in no instance ever spared himself, nor would he ever be persuaded to spare others. The rules and regulations of the service, as laid down by the Board of Admiralty, and the articles of war, were as rigidly observed by him, and exacted from others, as if they had been added to the Decalogue; and any deviation or neglect was sure to bring down reprimand or punishment upon the offender, whether it happened to be the senior lieutenant, or the smallest boy in the ship's company,

But, with all his severity, so determined was Captain M—— to be just, that he never would exercise the power without due reflection. On one occasion in which the conduct of a sailor had been very offensive, the first-lieutenant

observed, that summary punishment would have a very beneficial effect upon the ship's company in general. "Perhaps it might, Mr. H——," replied he; "but it is against a rule which I have laid down, and from which I never deviate. Irritated as I am at this moment with the man's conduct, I may perhaps consider it in a more heinous light than it deserves, and be guilty of too great severity. I am liable to error,—subject, as others, to be led away by the feelings of the moment—and have therefore made a compact with myself never to punish until twenty-four hours after the offence has been committed; and so repeatedly, when at the time I have settled in my mind the quantum of punishment that the offender should receive, have I found, upon reflection, which delay has given time for, reasons to mitigate the severity, that I wish, for the benefit of the service, that the Admiralty would give a standing order to that effect."

Such was the character of Captain M——.

It hardly need be added, after the events already narrated of this history, that he was a man of undaunted bravery. In his person, he was tall, and rather slight in figure. His features were regular; but there was a sternness in his countenance, and lines of deep thought on his brow, which rendered the expression unpleasant. It was only when he smiled that you would have pronounced him handsome: then he was more than handsome,—he was fascinating.

Mr. Bully, the first-lieutenant (who was the second-lieutenant in the ship, in the action with the French frigate), was an officer who well understood his duty. He had the merit of implicitly obeying all orders; and, considering the well known fact, that a first-lieutenant has always sufficient cause to be put out of temper at least twenty times during the twelve hours, he was as good tempered as a first-lieutenant could possibly be. He had entered the service when very young, and being of humble extraction, had not had any advantage of edu-

cation. In person, he was short and thick-set, and having suffered severely from the small-pox during his infancy, was by no means prepossessing in his outward appearance.

The second-lieutenant, whose name was Price, was a good looking young man, who kept his watch and read Shakspeare. He was constantly attempting to quote his favourite author; but, fortunately for those who were not fond of quotations, his memory was very defective.

Mr. Courtenay, the third-lieutenant, was a little bilious looking personage, who, to use the master's phraseology, was never quite happy unless he was d—d miserable. He was full of misfortunes and grievances, and always complaining or laughing, at his real or imaginary disasters; but his complaint would often end in a laugh, or his mirth terminate in a whine. You never could exactly say, whether he was in joke or in earnest. There was such a serio-comic humour about him, that one side of

his countenance would express pleasure, while the other indicated vexation. There seemed to be a perpetual war, in his composition, of good humour *versus* bile, both of which were most unaccountably blended in the same temperament.

According to seniority, Mr. Pierce, the master, is the next to be introduced to the reader ; in external appearance, a rough, hard-headed north-countryman ; but, with an unpromising exterior, he was a man of sense and feeling. He had every requisite for his situation : his nerves were like a chain-cable ; he was correct and zealous in his duty ; and a great favourite of the captain's, who was his countryman. He was about fifty years of age, a married man, with a large family.

The surgeon, whose name was Macallan, was also most deservedly a great favourite with Captain M—— ; indeed there was a friendship between them, grown out of long acquaintance with each other's worth, inconsistent with, and

unusual, in a service where the almost despotic power of the superior renders the intimacy of the inferior similar to the smoothing with your hand the paw of the lion, whose fangs, in a moment of caprice, may be darted into your flesh. He was a slight made, spare man, of about thirty-five years of age, and had graduated and received his diploma at Edinburgh,—an unusual circumstance at that period, although the education in the service was so defective, that the medical officers were generally the best informed in the ship. But he was more than the above; he was a naturalist, a man of profound research, and well informed upon most points—of an amiable and gentle disposition, and a sincere christian.

It would naturally be inferred, that those whose profession it is to investigate the human frame, and constantly have before their eyes the truth that we are fearfully and wonderfully made, would be more inclined than others to acknowledge the infinite wisdom and power.

But this is too often found not to be the case, and it would appear as if the old scholium, that "too much familiarity breeds contempt," may be found to act upon the human mind, even when in communion with the Deity. With what awe does the first acquaintance with death impress us! What a thrill passes through the living, as it bends over the inanimate body, from which the spirit has departed! The clay that returns to the dust from which it sprung,—the tenement that was lately endued with volition and life,—the frame, that exhibited a perfection of mechanism, deriding all human power, and confounding all human imagination, now an inanimate mass, rapidly decomposing, and soon to become a heap of corruption.

Strong as the feeling is, how evanescent it becomes, when once familiarized! It has no longer power over the senses, and the soldier and sailor pillow themselves on the corpse, with perfect indifference, if not with a jest. So it is with those who are accustomed to post-mortem arrange-

ments, who wash and lay out the body previous to interment.

Yet, although we acknowledge that habit will remove the first impressions of awe, how is it that the minute investigation upon which conviction ought to be founded, should too often have the contrary effect from that which it should produce? Is it because mystery, the parent of awe, is in a certain degree removed?

Faith, says the apostle, is the evidence of things not seen. There would be no merit in believing what is perfectly evident to the senses. Yet some would argue, that the evidence ought to be more clear and palpable. If so, would not the awe be also removed, and would religion gain by it? We have enough imparted to convince us that all is right; and is not that which is hidden or secret, purposely intended to produce that awe, without which the proud mind of man would spurn at infinite wisdom?

The above digression had nearly caused me to omit, that Macallan had one peculiar failing. His language, from long study, had been borrowed from books, more than from men; and when he entered upon his favourite science of natural history, his enthusiasm made him more pedantic in his style and pompous in his phraseology than ever. But who is perfect?

The purser, O'Keefe, was an elderly man, very careful of the pounds, shillings, and pence. He was affected with an incurable deafness, which he never thought proper to acknowledge—but, catching at a word or two in the sentence, would frame his answer accordingly, occasioning frequent mirth to his messmates, whom he imagined were laughing with, and not at him. For the present, I shall pass over the rest of the officers, with the exception of the boatswain, whose character was of a very peculiar nature.

He was a man who had long been considered as one of the best boatswains in the service, and had been applied for by Captain M——. He

used his cane with severity, but had always some jest at hand to soften down the smart of the blow, and was very active in his own person, setting an example to the men. It had, however, happened, that about a year before he joined, Mr. Hardsett had been induced by his wife to go with her to a conventicle, which the rising sect of methodists had established at the port where she resided ; and whether it was that his former life smote his conscience, or that the preacher was unusually powerful, he soon became one of the most zealous of his converts. He read nothing but his bible, which employed all his leisure hours, and he was continually quoting it in his conversation. But he was not exactly a methodist, taking the cognomen in the worst or the best interpretation ; he was an enthusiast and a fanatic—notwithstanding which, he contrived that his duty towards his Maker should not interfere with that of boatswain of the ship. Captain M—— regretted the man's bigotry ; but as he never tried to make any

converts, and did his duty in his situation, the captain did not attempt to interfere with his religious opinion,—the more so, as he was convinced that Hardsett was sincere.

The *Aspasia* was but a short time in harbour, for the captain was anxious to add to the laurels which he had already won, and having reported the ship ready for sea, received an order to proceed to the West India station. The frigate was unmoored, the *Blue Peter* hoisted, and the fore-top-sail loosened as the signal for departure: and after lying a short time with her anchor “shot stay apeak,” Captain M—— came on board,—the anchor was run up to the bows, and once more the frigate started, like an armed knight, in search of battle and adventure.

It was two o'clock in the afternoon, and the tenants of the gun-room had assembled to their repast. “Now all my misery is about to commence,” cried Courtenay, as he took his seat at the gun-room table, on which the dinner was

smoking in all the variety of pea-soup, Irish stew, and boiled mutton with caper sauce.

“ Indeed !” said the master. “ Pray, then, what is it that you have been grumbling about, ever since you have joined the ship ?”

“ Pshaw, they were only petty vexations, but now we are at sea. I shall be sea-sick. I am always obliged to throw off the accumulation of bile whenever I go out of harbour.”

“ I say, Doctor,” replied Pearce, “ can you stop up the leak in that little gentleman’s liver ? He’s not content to keep a hand-pump going to get rid of his bile when in harbour, but it seems that he requires the chain-pumps to be manned when he goes to sea.”

“ Chain-pumps !” exclaimed Courtenay, shuddering, and drawing back his head with a grimace at the idea of such a forcible discharge, and then looking round at his messmates with one of his serio-comic faces.

“ Pumps ! ay,” said Price ; “ you remember Shakspeare, in the Tempest—he says—dear me, —I—”

“Come, Price,” said Courtenay, “don’t make me sick before my time,—it’s unkind. You don’t know what an analogy there is between spouting and sea-sickness. In both cases you throw up what is nauseous, because your head or your stomach is too weak to retain it. Spare me, then, a quotation, my dear fellow, till you see me in the agony of Nature ‘aback,’ and then one will be of service in assisting her efforts to ‘box off.’ I say, Billy Pitts, did you stow away the two jars of pickled cabbage in my cabin?”

We must here break off the conversation to introduce this personage to the reader. He was a black, who ran away, when quite a lad, from his master at Barbadoes, and entered on board of a man-of-war. Macallan, the surgeon, had taken a fancy to him, and he had been his servant for some years, following him into different ships. He was a very intelligent and singular character. Macallan had taught him to read and write, and he was not a little proud

of his acquirements. He was excessively good humoured, and a general favourite of the officers and ship's company, who used to amuse themselves with his peculiarities, and allow him a greater freedom than usual. But Billy's grand *fort*, in his own opinion, was as a lexicographer. He had a small Entick's dictionary, which he always carried in his jacket pocket, and nothing gave him so much pleasure as any one referring to him for the meaning of a hard word, which, although he could not always explain correctly, he certainly did most readily. Moreover, he was, as may be supposed, very fond of interlarding his conversation with high-sounding phraseology, without much regard as to the context.

Although Billy Pitt was the doctor's servant, Courtenay, who had taken a great fancy to him, used to employ him as his own, to which, as the doctor was not a man who required much attendance himself, and was very good-natured, no objection had been raised.

We must repeat the question—

“I say, Billy Pitt, did you stow away the two jars of pickled cabbage in my cabin?”

“No, Sar, I no hab'em to stow. Woman say, that Mr. Kartney not pay for the pickled onun—say quite incongrous send any more.”

“Not pay for the onions? No, to be sure I didn't, but I gave her a fresh order, which is the same thing.” (Price laid down the potato which he was in the act of peeling, and stared at Courtenay with astonishment.) “Well, to a London tradesman, it is, I can assure you.”

“It may be, but I cannot conceive how. If you owe me ten shillings, I can't consider borrowing ten more the same thing as paying the first.”

“Pooh, you do not understand these things.”

“I do not, most certainly,” replied the master, resuming his potato.

“And so you haven't got them?” resumed Courtenay to the servant.

“No, Sar. She say Massa Kartney owe

nine shillings for onuns, and say I owe farteen for 'baccy, and not trust us any more. I tell just as she say, Sir. Gentlemen never pay for any thing. She call me d——d nigger, and say, like massa like man. I tell her not give any more *rhoromantade*, and walk out of shop."

"Well, how cursed annoying! Now I never set my mind upon anything but I'm disappointed. One might as well be Sancho in the Isle of Barataria. I think I'll go up to the captain, and ask him to heave-to, while I send for them. Do you think he would, master, eh?" said Courtenay, in affected simplicity of interrogation.

"You had better try him," replied Pearce, laughing.

"Well, it would be very considerate of him, and pickled cabbage is the only thing that cures my sea-sickness."—(Perceiving Price about to speak)—"Stop now—it's no use—there's not a word about pickled-cabbage in Shakspeare."

"I did not say that there was," retorted Price; "but there's 'beef without mustard,' and that will be your case now."

"And there's 'Write me down an ass,'" replied Courtenay, who was not a little vexed at the loss of his favourite condiment.

"Did you hear what Courtenay said of you, O'Keefe?" continued Price, turning to the purser.

"Yes—yes—I know—hand him over a glass; but this is not a clane one. Steward, will you bring a clane wine-glass?"

The rest laughed, while Courtenay proceeded.

"Why, O'Keefe, you hear better than ever. I say, doctor, you must put me in the sick list—I'm not fit to take charge of a watch."

"If you'll prove that to me," replied Macallan, "I certainly will report you."

"Well, I'll prove it to you in five seconds. I'm just in that state, that if every thing in the ship was to go overboard to the devil, I should'nt care. Now with such a feeling of in-

difference, a person is not fit to be trusted with the charge of a watch."

"That you're not fit to be trusted with the charge of a watch, as you state it yourself, I shall not deny," replied Macallan; "but I consider that to be a complaint for which you ought rather to be put *off* the list than on it."

"Ha! ha! ha! I say, Courtenay, you know what Shakspeare says, 'tis the curse of service,' that—that—"

"All hands, 'bout, ship!" now resounded through the ship, as it was repeated in the variety of bases of the boatswain and his mates at either hatchway—one of the youngsters of the watch running down at the same time to acquaint the officers, in his shrill falsetto, with that which had been roared out loud enough to startle even the deaf purser. The first-lieutenant, followed by the master, brushed by him, and was up the ladder before his supererogatory communication could be delivered.

"How cursed annoying!" cried Courtenay.

"I was just feeling a little better, and now I shall be worse than ever."

"You recollect, in the *Tempest*," said Price, "where Shakspeare says—"

"Forecastle there!" roared out Captain M——, from the quarter-deck, in a voice that was distinctly heard below.

"By Jove you'd better skip for it, or you'll have what Captain M—— says. He's hailing your station," said Courtenay, laughing—a piece of advice immediately acted upon by Price, who was up the ladder and on the forecastle in a few seconds.—"And I must go up too. How cursed annoying to be stationed in the waste! Nothing to do, except to stop my ears against the infernal stamp-and-go of the marines and after-guards, over my head; sweet music to a first-lieutenant, but to me discord most horrible. I could *stamp* with vexation."

"Had you not better *go* first, and *stamp* afterwards?" observed the surgeon, drily.

“I think I had, indeed,” replied Courtenay, as he bolted out of the gun-room-door.—“Cursed annoying; but the captain’s such a bilious subject.”

CHAPTER XX.

This chair shall be my state, this dagger my sceptre, and this cushion my crown.

Henry IV. Part I.

WE must now descend to the steerage, where our hero is seated in the berth, in company with a dozen more (as they designated themselves, from the extreme heat of their domicile) *perspiring* young heroes, who were amusing themselves with crunching hard biscuits, and at the same time a due proportion of those little animals of the scarabee tribe, denominated

weevils, who had located themselves in the *unleavened bread*, and which the midshipmen declared to be the only fresh meat which they had tasted for some time.

Captain M——'s character stood so high at the Admiralty, that the major part of the young *aspirants* who had been committed to his charge, were of good family and connexions. At that time few of the aristocracy or gentry ventured to send their sons into the navy; whereas, at present, none but those classes can obtain admission.

A better school for training young officers could not have been selected; and the midshipmen's berth of the *Aspasia* was as superior to those in other ships, as Captain M—— was himself to the generality of his contemporary captains in the service. But I cannot pay these young men the compliment to introduce them one by one, as I did the gun-room officers. It would be an anomaly unheard of. I shall, therefore, with every respect for them, describe

them just as I want them. It was one bell after eight o'clock—a bottle of ship's rum, a black jack of putrid water, and a tin bread-basket, are on the table, which is lighted with a tallow candle of about thirteen to the pound.

“I say, Mr. Jerry Sneak, what are you after there—what are you foraging for in that locker?” said one of the oldsters of the berth, to a half-starved, weak-looking object of a youngster, whose friends had sent him to sea with the hopes of improving his stamina.

“What for?—why, for my supper, if you must know. D'ye think I *look too fat*? I stowed it away before I went on deck, that it might not fall into your ravenous maw.”

“Mind your stops, my Jack of the Bone-house, or I shall shy a biscuit at your head.”

“Do, and prove your bravery; it will be so very courageous. I suppose you'll expect to be gazetted for it.”

The youngster who had been dignified with the above sobriquet, and who made these

replies, was certainly a most miserable looking object, and looked as if a top-gallant breeze would have blown him to atoms. But if his body was weak, his tongue was most powerful. He resorted to no other weapon, and used that skilfully. He was a species of Thersites, and no dread of punishment could control his railing. He offered no resistance, but bent down like the reed, and resumed his former position as soon as the storm was over. His keen and sarcastic remarks, although they occasionally subjected him to chastisement, to a certain degree served him as a defence, for he could always raise a laugh at the expense of the individual whom he attacked, with the formidable weapon which he had inherited direct from his mother.

The oldster before mentioned put his hand into the bread-basket, and seized a handful of the biscuit. "Now I'll bet you a glass of grog that you don't throw a biscuit at my head," cried Jerry, with a sneer.

“Done,” replied the oldster, throwing the contents of his hand at Jerry with all his force.

“I’ll just trouble you for that glass of grog, for you’ve lost,” said the youngster, taking it up from the table where it stood before the oldster; “you’ve only thrown some pieces, and not a biscuit;” and following up his words with deeds, he swallowed down the whole contents of the tumbler, which he replaced very coolly before his opponent.

“Fair bet, and fairly lost,” cried the rest of the berth, laughing.

“You scarecrow ! you’re not worth thrashing,” said the oldster, angrily.

“Why, that’s exactly what I have been trying to impress upon your memory ever since I have joined the ship. There’s no credit to be gained by licking a half-starved wretch like I am ; but there’s Bruce, now,” (pointing to one of the oldsters, between whom and his opponent a jealousy subsisted), “why don’t you lick him ?

There would be some credit in that. But you know better than to try it."

"Do I?" retorted the oldster, forgetting himself in the heat of the moment.

"Yes, you do," replied Bruce, jumping up in defiance, and there was every appearance of a disturbance, much to the delight of Jerry, who, provided that they fought, was quite indifferent which party was the victor. But a fortunate interruption took place, by the appearance of the master-at-arms.

"Nine o'clock, gentlemen, if you please—the lights must be put out."

"Very well, master-at-arms," replied one of the oldsters.

The master-at-arms took his seat on a chest close to the door of the berth, aware that a second summons, if not a third, would be requisite, before his object was obtained. In a few minutes he again put his head into the berth.

"Nine o'clock, gentlemen, if you please. I must report you to the first-lieutenant."

“ Very well, Byfield—it shall be out in a minute.”

The master-at-arms resumed his station on the chest outside.

“ Why, it’s Saturday night,” cried Bruce. “ Sweethearts and wives, my boys, though I believe none of us are troubled with the latter. Forster, pass the rum.”

“ I’ll pass the bottle, and you may make a bull of it, if you choose.”

“ Confound it, no more grog—and Saturday night. I must drink auld lang syne, by Heavens.”

The master-at-arms again made his appearance. “ Gentlemen, you must put the light out.”

“ Stop one minute, Byfield. Let us see whether we can get any more rum.”

The excuse appeared reasonable to the jack in office, and he disappeared.

“ Boy, tell Billy Pitt I want him.”

Billy Pitt had turned in, but was soon roused out of his hammock, and made his appearance

at the berth door, with only his shirt on that he was sleeping in.

“ You want me, Massa Bruce ?”

“ Billy, my beau, you know everything. We sent for you to tell us what’s the meaning of a repartee ?”

“ Repartee, Sir—Repartee !—stop a bit—Eh—I tell you, Sir. Suppose you call me dam nigger—then I call you one dam dirty white-livered son of a b— ; dat a repartee, Sir.”

“ Capital, Billy—you shall be a bishop. But Billy, has your master got any rum in his cabin ?”

“ Which massa, Sir ? Massa Courtenay, or Massa Doctor ?”

“ Oh ! Courtenay, to be sure. The surgeon never has any.”

“ Yes, Sar, I tink he have a little.”

“ Be quick, Billy, and fetch it. I will give it you back at the tub to-morrow.”

“ Suppose you forget, Sir, you put me in very fine *predical-ament*. Massa Courtenay look dam blue—no, he not look blue, but he

look dam yellow," replied Billy, shewing his white teeth as he grinned.

"But I won't forget, Billy, upon my honour."

"Well, honour quite enough between two gentlemen. I go fetch the bottle."

Billy soon reappeared with a quart bottle of rum, just as three bells were struck. "By gad, I rattle the bottle as I take him out—wake Mr. Courtenay—he say, dam black fellow he make everything adrift—cursed annoying, he say, and go to sleep again."

"Really, gentlemen, I cannot wait any longer," resumed the master-at-arms; "the lights must be reported, or I shall be in disgrace."

"Very true, Byfield; you are only doing your duty. Will you take a glass of grog?"

"If you please," replied Mr. Byfield, taking off his hat. "Your health, gentlemen."

"Thank you," replied the midshipmen. "Tank you, Sir," replied also Billy Pitt.

"Well, Billy. What's the last word you read in your dictionary?"

“ Last word ? Let me see.—Oh ! commission, Sar. You know dat word ? ”

“ Commission ! We all know what that is, Billy, and shall be glad to get it too, by and by.”

“ Yes, Sar; but there are two kind of commission. One you want, obliged to wait for ; one I want, always have at once,—commission as agent, Sar.”

“ Oh, I understand,” replied Bruce ; “ five per cent. on the bottle, eh ? ”

“ Five per cent. not make a tiff glass of grog, Massa Bruce.”

“ Well then, Billy, you shall have ten per cent.,” replied the midshipman, pouring him out a *north-wester*. “ Will that do ? ”

The black had the politeness to drink the health of all the gentlemen of the berth separately, before he poured the liquor down his throat. “ Massa Bruce, I tink doctor got a little rum in his cabin.”

"Go and fetch it, Billy; you shall have it back to-morrow."

"Honour, Mr. Bruce."

"Honour, Mr. Pitt."

"Ten per cent., Massa Bruce," continued Billy, grinning.

"Ten per cent. is the bargain."

"I go see."

Another quart bottle made its appearance; and the agent, having received his commission, made his bow, and returned to his hammock.

"I do—really—think—upon—my—word—that—that—black—scoundrel—would—sell—his—own—mother—for—a—stiff—glass—of—grog," observed a youngster, of the name of Prose, a cockney, who drawled out his words, which, "like a wounded snake, dragged their slow length along."

"The lights, gentlemen, if you please," resumed the master-at-arms, putting his head again into the door.

"Another commission," said Jerry: "a tax upon light. Billy Pitt has the best right to it."

A second glass of grog was poured out, and the bribe disappeared down Mr. Byfield's gullet.

"Now we'll put the light out," said one of the oldsters, covering the candlestick with a hat.

"If you will put your candle into my lantern," observed the obsequious master-at-arms, "I can then report the lights out. Of course you will allow it to remain there?"

The suggestion was adopted; and the light was reported *out*, to the first-lieutenant, at the very moment that it was taken *out* of the lantern again, and replaced in the candlestick. The duplicate supply began to have its effect upon our incipient heroes, who commenced talking of *their friends*. Bruce, a fine, manly, honourable Scotchman, had the peculiarity of always allying himself, when half drunk, to the

royal house who formerly sat upon the throne of England: but, when quite intoxicated, he was so treasonable as to declare himself the lawful King of Great Britain. Glass after glass increased his propinquity to the throne, till at last he seated himself on it, and the uproar of the whole party rose to that height, that the first-lieutenant sent out, desiring the midshipmen immediately to retire to their hammocks.

“ Send me to bed ! ‘ Proud man, dressed in a little brief authority.’ If the Lord’s anointed had been respected, he, with millions, would be now bending the knee to me. Well, if I can’t be king of all England, at least I’ll be king in this berth. Tell me,” cried Bruce, seizing the unfortunate Prose by the collar, “ am I not king ? ”

“ Why—according—to—the—best—of—my—belief,” said Prose, “ I—should—rather—be—inclined—to—think—that—you—are—not—the—king.”

“ Am not, base slave !” cried Bruce, throwing him on the deck, and putting his foot on his chest.

“ No—if—I die for it—I don’t care—but if you are—not king—I must own—that—you—are one of—my thirty tyrants,” drawled out Prose, half suffocated with the pressure.

“ I—do—declare,” cried Jerry, imitating Prose’s drawl, “ that—he—has—squeezed—a pun—out—of—you.”

“ Am not I king ?” resumed Bruce, seizing Jerry, who had advanced within reach, to laugh at Prose.

“ I feel that you ought to be,” replied Jerry ; “ and I don’t doubt your lineal descent : for you have all the dispositions of the race from which you claim descent. A boon, your gracious majesty,” continued Jerry, bending on one knee.

“ Thou shalt have it, my loyal subject,” replied Bruce, who was delighted with the homage,

“even (as Ahasuerus said to Esther) to the half of my kingdom.”

“God forbid that I should deprive your majesty of that,” replied Jerry, smiling at the idea of *halving nothing*. “It is only to request that I may not keep the middle watch to-night.”

“Rise, Jerry, you shall not keep a night-watch for a fortnight.”

“I humbly thank your most gracious majesty,” replied the astute boy, who was a youngster of the watch of which Bruce was mate.

As the reader may be amused with the result of this promise, he must know, that Bruce, who did not recollect what had passed, when he perceived Jerry not to be on deck, sent down for him. The youngster, on his appearance, claimed his promise; and his claim was allowed by Bruce, rather than he would acknowledge himself to have been intoxicated. Jerry, upon the strength of the agreement, continued, for more than the prescribed time, to sleep in every night

watch, until, aware that he was no longer safe, he thought of an expedient which would probably ensure him one night longer, and prevent a disagreeable interruption of his dreams. Prose, whose hammock was hung up next the hatchway, had a bad cold, and Jerry thought it prudent to shift his berth, that he might not be found.

“It’s the draught from the hatchway that makes your cold so bad, Prose; you’ll never get well while you sleep there. I will give you my inside berth until it is better—’tis really quite distressing to hear you cough.”

“Well now, Jerry, that’s what I call very good-natured of you. I have not had such a friendly act done towards me since I joined the ship, and I do assure you, Jerry, that I shall not be ungrateful,—I shall not forget it.”

It happened that, on the very night that Prose exchanged berths with Jerry, Bruce made his calculation that the fortnight had elapsed three days back: and although he felt

himself bound in honour to keep his promise, yet feeling rather sore at being over-reached, he now ordered the quarter-master to cut Jerry's hammock down by the head. This was supposed to be done, and poor Prose, who had just fallen asleep after keeping the previous watch, awoke with a stunning sensation, and found his feet up at the beams and his head on the deck ; while Jerry who had been awakened by the noise, was obliged to cram the sheets into his mouth, that his laughter might be unperceived.

“ Well now, I do declare, this is too bad—I most certainly will complain to the captain, to-morrow morning—as sure as my name is Prose. Sentry, bring me a light, and assist me to get my hammock up again—I will not put up with this treatment,—I do declare ;” and so saying, Prose once more resumed his position in his precarious dormitory.

But, during our digression, the berth has become empty,—some walking, and others, parti-

cularly his majesty, reeling to bed. So we shall close this chapter, from which the reader may perceive, that, even in the best regulated ships, there is more going on in a midshipman's berth than a captain is acquainted with, or that comes between Heaven and his philosophy.

END OF VOL. I.

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